SC votes 8-7 to stop NBN deal

By Leila B. Salaverria

IN A VOTE OF 8-7, THE SUPREME COURT yesterday ordered a stop to the implementation of the $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, which has been tainted with allegations of bribery, cronyism and unsound known.

The seven justices who voted against the temporary restraining order (TRO) were mostly new appointees to the tri-

ACTION SEEN

METRO / A25

No classes today at Ateneo, 23 other QC schools near Sandigan

BUSINESS / B1

Exports jumped 4.5% in July to $4.2B

NEWS / A4

POEA throws out case filed by 26 Pinoy nurses, therapists vs Sentosa agency

NEWS / A21

Lacson: GMA driving force behind NBN deal

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, September 12, 2007 ★★ Vol. 21 / No. 276 www.inquirer.net

9/11 shot takes toll on woman photographer

CHARRISVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA — AVALINcia M. McClatchey thought she was doing the right thing when she gave the FBI a copy of her photo of the mushroom cloud that rose over the hill outside her home after United Flight 93 crashed in a field here on Sept. 11, 2001.

And, after 10 minutes spent with fathers

FULL STORY A-10

AFTER 6 YEARS, 4 MONTHS, 17 DAYS

Judgment Day for Erap

All roads to Palace sealed: 8,000 troops stand by

By Nikko Dizon, Michael Lim Ubac and Nicole Puno

ARMY REINFORCEMENTS OF 2,000 soldiers, an infantry company with armored personnel carriers, a helicopter squadron, K-9 and explosives unit and motorized teams are on standby to augment a 6,000-strong police force just in case protests erupt in violence in the capital today.

Roads leading to Malacañang were sealed off with military trucks, barbed wire fences and container vans on the eve of the promulgation of the Sandiganbayan decision on the plunder charges against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

All of President Macapagal-Arroyo's scheduled activities to the last have been cancelled, including a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Virgin Mary in Lipa City to pray for peace and unity. She has been advised to stay in the Palace.

Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada is a prestige speech yesterday denouncement as a sign of "paranoia" the security preparations and Mr. Arroyo's assigning of her scheduled activities.

"Is there a ghost of her own

ALL ROADS A-11

"THE FORCE OF THE PEOPLE has already acquitted me," former President Estrada reiterates on the eve of judgment day while his counsel, son Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, denounces the security preparations as "paranoia."

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Norman Bordadora

JOSEPH ESTRADA TURNED TO PRAYER ON THE eve of Judgment Day, spending a quiet afternoon by himself and taking a stroll in his sprawling vacation estate in Tanay, Rizal, where he has been under house arrest since 2004.

"I pray hard that the justices will decide based on the merits of the case. I pray that they will be enlightened," he told the lawyers yesterday on the phone, referring his earlier remark that the Sandiganbayan Special Division that will hear its verdict today on his plunder and perjury cases had been screened previously to convict him.

And then, speaking like a powerful man exhorting his partisans, the ousted President called for calm among his supporters, saying he was prepared for whatever verdict the court might issue: "Sila ay bumwelo! Anuman'ng mangyari, ang mga ang mapigang desisyon ay hindi ko sila. I cherish more the voice of the people, who have already acquitted me.

"My freedom is no longer my concern because what is more important is the freedom of our people in their search for truth and their fight against poverty."

He also said in reply to a taped message aired yesterday by radio station DZBB.

Estrada, 70, is accused of amassing more than P4 billion in gambling payoffs and kickbacks (or tara) from jueteng, and of falsely declaring his assets.

The court will also rule on the

ARRAIGNMENT A11

The Verdict
MOMENT OF TRUTH

High court OKs live TV-radio coverage

By Leila B. Salaverria

PEOPLE CAN WATCH HISTORY unfold on their TV sets or listen to it on radio today after the Supreme Court allowed the live airing of the promulgation of the verdict in the plunder case against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Acting on the urgent motion of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP), the high court yesterday gave the go-signal for the airing of the

BROADCAST A10

Up to defense lawyers to prolong agony

By Volt Contreras and TJ Burgonio

IT WILL ACTUALLY BE UP TO Joseph Estrada and his lawyers if they want to prolong his agony in the courtroom starting at 9 a.m. today.

According to Sandiganbayan Sheriff Ed Trinta, accused parties have a "right" to have their verdict read out at full. On some cases, the court can shorten the promulgation by limiting the reading to the "dis-

AP TO CONTROL A-11

Acquittal in 'unusual' case is trouble for GMA

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE FATE OF DEPOSED PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada is not the only issue at stake when the Sandiganbayan issues its verdict today.

Beyond Estrada's freedom or continued incarceration is the validity—or repudiation—of John II that drove him out of office six years ago,

ACQUITTAL A-11

3 justices hold Estrada's fate in their hands

By Jocelyn R. Uy

A SECURITY SHIELD HAS BEEN INSTALLED for three magistrates of the Sandiganbayan when they make history today. Two of them are potential candidates for the Supreme Court and the third has earned a reputation for toughness.

The three justices hold in their hands the fate of deposed President Joseph Estrada when he stands before them at about 9 a.m. to hear their verdict in the landmark corruption trial.

Chief Justice Minita Chico-Nazario, Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro and Associate Justice Gherardo Peralta and Francisco Villaruz Jr. will be closely guarded by police and court security officers, Sheriff Ed Trinta said yesterday.

Trinta tried to downplay the extra security that has been provided the three, saying it was only "a precautionary measure" and

3 JUSTICES A10

IS SHE OR ISN'T SHE? Josephine Rose "JR" Estrada, who claims to be Estrada's daughter, arrives in Tanay estate on Tuesday with her son but was not allowed entry. (More on Page A1-B.)

THE CLOSE-KNIT Estrada-Ejercitos have been holding a prayer vigil since last Sunday at the family residence on Polk Street, Greenhills, San Juan, where Jinggoy with wife Precy and Jackie Ejercito-Lopez flank the ex-President and ex-Sen. Loi Estrada (center). In the last row is Senator Lopez (2nd from left) and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito (extreme right) and wife.

WEATHER FORECAST

Second
FRONTPAGE

Miriam chips away at Doble

Gives primer on retraction of testimony in privilege speech

By Dil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO YESTERDAY hammered away at the credibility of former Army Lt. Sgt. Vidal Doble Jr. as the star witness in the revived "Hello Garci" probe, noting that his "retraction" of his earlier testimony in the House of Representatives would carry little weight in a court of law.

Sen. Pantaleon Lacson, however, stood firmly behind the witness as he called on Bishop Socrates Villegas to appear before the Senate in its hearing on Monday.

In a privilege speech meant to guide committees on how to appreciate testimony in the Hello Garci hearings, Santiago said "A retraction, sometimes called a recantation, takes place when a witness has previously given an extrajudicial statement or court testimony, but later repudiates what he said, by issuing a contradictory written statement or a contradictory testimony. In a general rule, retraction has little weight as evidence. This rule has been stated in very strong language in specific cases decided by the Philippine Supreme Court. The court has held in a number of cases that a retraction of a testimony is incredible and unreliable."

Santiago was reacting to Doble's testimony at the Senate hearing on Friday where he retracted his previous testimonies in the House and the Court of Appeals where he had claimed that he was not part of any wiretapping operation.

Doble, however, claimed on Friday that the military intelligence service had wiretapped the President and that the military, with the participation of a Malacañang official, had threatened his wife, sisters, and children to shut him up in 2005.

According to Doble, he was forced to keep to himself what he knew about the "Hello Garci" tape for the past seven years because of his wife and family were being held against their will by the agents of the military chief of staff.

Doble also claimed that it was Ador who had identified the Malacañang undersecretary to him as "Mely, a secretary of President Macapagal-Arroyo." The Palace official, later identified to be Immediate Publisher of the legislative liaison office, also reportedly offered to "help" them.

Santiago said that based on the rules of evidence, Doble "hearsay, the burden of proof" on his claim that he was not at an illegal wiretapping operation within the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, specifically the alleged Commander Project Lighthouse.

Santiago said she asked that Doble's wife, Arlene, also be made to testify because the rules of evidence dictate that a husband or wife cannot be examined without the consent of the other on any communication received in confidence by one from the other.

Santiago said that a source could "implicate" Doble "by evidence that his general reputation for truth, honesty or integrity were bad," as for evidence that he had given at other times, statements inconsistent with his present testimony constitute hearsay evidence."

But Lacson was for "from giving up on this witness. He said Doble was more than prepared for further grilling by Santiago at the next hearing.

Since Malacañang had moved to block the appearance of all government officials at the probe, including presidential aide Palparan, Lacson said he would ask for Villegas to appear personally at the hearing because the latter withdrew that he submitted to the inquiry on Friday was insufficient.

Reds buck amnesty, claim it's excuse to get Joma back

By Jerome Aning

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC Front of the Philippines (NDFP) yesterday rejected President Macapagal-Arroyo's amnesty proclamation, denouncing it as an "obvious attempt" to justify a request for the deportation of jailed commander Jose Ma. Sison.

Luis Jalandoni, NDFP negotiating panel chair who is also based in the Netherlands, said Jose Ducena, presidential assistant for the peace process, "let the cat out of the bag" when he said Sison would be covered by the amnesty proclamation.

The proclamation, issued earlier this month, needs the concurrence of Congress before it can be implemented.

The NDFP is the political arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines that has been waging a guerrilla war for over 30 years, was arrested in the Netherlands on Aug. 28 on charges he had ordered the killing of former comrades Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tolentino in the Philippines.

Jalandoni, NDFP negotiator and another secretary making a bona fide for corruption, not only by his and his relatives in the Cabinet over eight consecutive but [illegible] words is but also by her chosen military and local officials," Jalandoni said.

Alleged encumbrances, he said, would be "manufactured" and provided with [illegible] weapons. They will be paid mostly using for the [illegible] Sison, the Hollands [illegible] while huge amounts will be pocketed by [illegible].

Jalandoni claimed there was growing international condemnation of the Dutch government for the arrest of Sison and the raids on the NDFP office and the houses of its suspected members.

NETHERLANDS Ambassador to the Philippines Robert Visser bids President Macapagal-Arroyo farewell in Palo, during a farewell call in her case of duty in the country's care to an end. The Inquirer, among other things, has served and detention of communist leader Jose Ma. Sison (9/Jun/06).

Torture victim recalls ordeal in AFP hands

By Alison W. Lopez

HE IS STILL TOO SCARED TO COME OUT of hiding. But in a 20-minute video shown to the press yesterday, 26-year-old Raymund Manalo of Gen. Tinio, Bulacan, recalled a chilling tale of over 300 days of torture under various [illegible] military and paramilitary abductors.

"Binugbog niya ng hard pero mahina naman, binubusan ng tubig at ilong hanggang hindi ako makahinga, hindi ako humihinga," he said. He [illegible] he was [illegible] and finally [illegible] "Sabi ko [illegible] ako ng [illegible] ako ng [illegible] ako ng

Barangay, SK bets may file candidacies

By Beverly T. Mamaclay

CANDIDATES FOR THE BARANGAY AND Sangguniang Kabataan elections next month may start filing their certificates of candidacy on Friday, the Commission on Elections announced yesterday.

In a statement, the Comelec said it would accept certificates of candidacy between Sept. 14 and 19, as provided for by Comelec Resolution No. 8297.

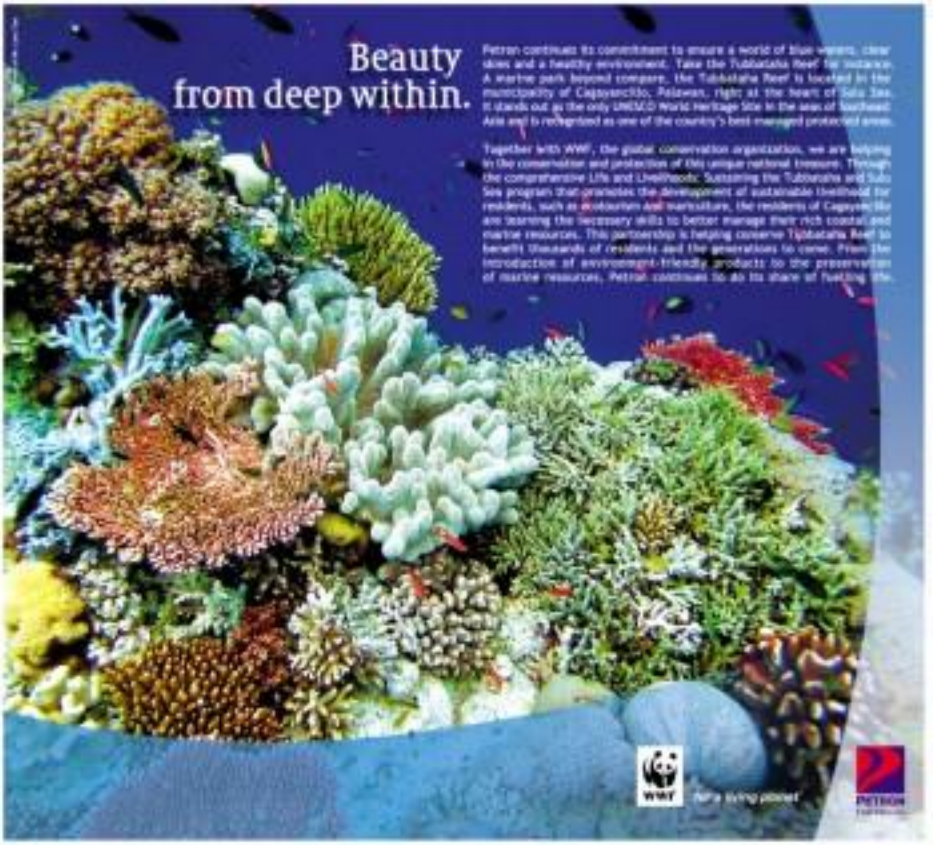
The Comelec said that those wishing to run for punong barangay (village chief), barangay kagawad (councilor), SK (youth) chair and SK kagawad must file their certificates in person or through an authorized representative with their respective city or municipal election officers.

Not ruling us would mean disqualification, the Comelec said.

"No certificate of candidacy shall be filed or accepted by mail, telegram or facsimile," the poll body said.

The barangay and SK elections are scheduled for Oct. 29. A barangay chair and seven councilors will be elected, as well as one SK chair and seven SK councilors, in every barangay in the country.

The House of Representatives is currently debating a bill that would postpone the barangay and SK polls after it was brought up that holding another election so close to last May's midterm poll would only re-ignite political tensions as well as another round of campaign spending.



Printing life

Dawn Admits: My Husband Has A New *Lover*

"I think that having not only a sexy figure, but a healthy lifestyle helps in keeping the fire burning in any marriage. Kasi when you take these things for granted, it's like taking your partner for granted."

After almost a decade of being referred to as a yoga instructor, Astrid Ageloarei actress Dawn Zulueta has finally gotten the courage to admit she knows her marriage.

"My husband has a new lover," she blurted by the force. This new woman in her husband's life has a stunning hourglass figure – long sexy legs, a shapely waist, slender arms and a flat tummy. She even looks younger than Dawn was a few years ago.

Who is this new woman? Robin, a makeup consultant manager is from itself to your mind, let the truth be known. Her husband's new lover – is Dawn herself!

After weight struggles mostly a result of her pregnancy, Dawn has managed to regain her whistle-lean body through religiously undergoing Marie France treatments, watching her diet and living a healthy lifestyle. At one point she reached 146 lbs. and a 40-inch waistline a far cry from her formerly slim figure.

She reveals, "I went up 40 pounds after giving birth. My waistline was 40! 44! And that was from a 27 inch waistline! Imagine! I mean if you think about it, nagpapa-liposuction lang ako dito! I actually consulted a doctor about it and was so close to doing it already. But the doctor said, 'Dawn, long-term na solution, nag-exercise ang ga-liposuction ka!' Kasi nga, 'exercise' ang sagot. Kasi nga, 'exercise' ang sagot. She was being honest. That's same if you gain weight again after you have liposuction, the fat is somewhere else and that's not the solution."

Dawn recalls, "I knew that I was getting fatter and fatter. My self-confidence was at an all-time low. I was depressed. I'm using mga nipples. Parang hanggang? Plus, I don't like nursing marks on my body. With lipo, kaibe-maibili. I still don't like nursing scars. Pag nagpa-sex ako ng-halfway nasa, parang hahanap nasa ginawa ako sa iyon na 'to.'

"When I visited doing Marie France I told myself, 'Why didn't I think of this before?'" Dawn recalls. "I started to lose weight soon as soon as amount of exercise could lose! Like my saddlebags, cellulites gonesies. They have so many modalities! All the treatments are synergies of and more intensive to it's only."

Now at 126 lbs. with a healthier, slimmer body, she is happier, more confident and more energetic. Dawn stresses, however, that she is all for being that she feels healthy-way. She even admits to loving food, overflowing Divergence from the constant eating disorders many celebrities fall victim to. "It would be difficult for me to overdiet because I'm surrounded with a lot of people who love to eat. My own family loves to eat. So it's difficult for me to try to keep everything to a minimum, especially all the rich foods. But that's where discipline comes in."

And her discipline and commitment stem to Marie France have paid off with her figure as evidence. "I think that having not only a sexy figure, but a healthy lifestyle helps in keeping the fire burning in any marriage," Dawn states. "I know that I look good. It's good it helps because it boosts my confidence when it comes to being with my husband. It implies for to him is also happy with the way I look, and I guess he also sees how happy I am with the way I am."

"It even affects your sex mood," Dawn adds. "It affects everything you do. Now, when my husband wants to go out or do anything, it's easier for me to get up and go because I'll be into anything. Unlike before, I'd refuse to go out and tell him I had nothing to wear. He'd tell me, 'Hi, I'll buy you something to wear,' but then I'd tell him, 'It's 2 sizes bigger than my original size.' Ways to long. I'd just get depressed. So that could've posed bigger problems if it kept on happening. Now I know binding and everything about male-athlete and accepting each other is a normal development in any relationship. However having said that, it's also still important to maintain some kind of mystery and allure. Kasi when you take these things for granted, it's like taking your partner for granted. So I think it's important that married couples keep themselves looking good for each other, like how it was when they were still dating. And that goes for the women too!"

As for her husband's "new lover," what is she up to now? "Actually, I'm pregnant," Dawn excitedly announces. "I am 3 months into my husband and I are going to work out to this is the most big project for me. And now is going to see one gets weight all over again!"

She is not worried however. "You're going to see me lose it all again too," she promises. "Cause then I always Marie France!"

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PRINT TOWN

Half of Pinoys happy with RP democracy–survey

ONE OF EVERY TWO ADULT FILIPINOS is satisfied with the way democracy works in the country, according to the latest survey by the Social Weather Stations.

The 54-percent democracy satisfaction rating was the highest since it hit 61 percent in June 1999. In the past eight years since, it has almost always been in the 30s and 40s, recording 50 percent only once in March 2002.

The SWS noted that satisfaction with the way democracy works peaked after the presidential elections of 1992 and 1998, it hit 70 percent in October 1992 and again in July 1998, "obviously related to the successful process of the presidential elections of 1992 and 1998," the SWS said in a statement released yesterday.

Satisfaction with democracy was only at 44 percent in June 2000, after then president's overthrow.

The survey conducted from June 27 to 30, also found that around the same percentage (53 percent) preferred democracy over any other kind of government, while nearly one in every five (19 percent) said that "under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one."

Meanwhile, 23 percent said that "for people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or a nondemocratic regime."

In four previous SWS national surveys conducted in 2007, the percentage of Filipinos saying "democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government" ranged from 52 to 58 percent.

"This is an increase from 49 percent in September 2000, and is more or less a recovery to (the) levels from 2002 to 2005, when it ranged from 51 to 64 percent," SWS said.

Also February 2007, around 15 to 19 percent have said that "under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one."

The percentage of respondents with the same opinion ranged from 13 to 26 percent in the period 2002 to 2006.

Those who say it does not matter "whether we have a democratic or nondemocratic regime" ranged from 23 percent to 28 in the four SWS surveys this year, similar to 28 percent in September 2000 and higher than the 18 to the 22 percent between 2002 and 2005.

By comparison with other Asian countries, using the results of the 2001 Asian Barometer surveys, only 36 percent of Filipinos were satisfied with how democracy worked in the country trailing Singaporeans (82 percent), Thais (80 percent), Mongolians (54 percent), Indonesians (50 percent), Taiwanese (36 percent) and Koreans (48 percent).

The same survey also found the majority in Thailand (71 percent), Indonesia (64 percent) and Singapore (59 percent) saying they always preferred democracy to any other kind of government. Around half in the Philippines (51 percent) and Taiwan (46 percent), and two-fifths in Korea (42 percent) and Mongolia (39 percent) shared the view at the time.

The Asian Barometer Survey covered topics such as social infrastructure development, economic conditions, life values and satisfactions, social actions, customs and rules, identity, political consciousness and health conditions.

Filipinos' regard for democracy compared favorably with Europeans countries. The results of a Eurobarometer survey conducted in March-May 2006 found that 68 percent of Europeans were satisfied with the way democracy worked in the European Union, with satisfaction ranging from 93 percent in 49 percent in the past 10 years. Kara Pedrosa, Inquirer Research

Pinoy nurses lose case filed against NY recruiter

By Jerome Aning

FOR "UTTER LACK OF MERIT," THE Philippine Overseas and Employment Administration dismissed charges of recruitment violations filed by 26 Filipino health care professionals against the Sentosa Recruitment Agency (SRA) and its mother agency, the New York-based Sentosa Care LLC.

"No regulation on overseas employment was violated by the respondents in the recruitment and deployment of complainants to its principal in the United States," said the decision by POEA administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz dated Sept. 6.

The complainants accused Sentosa of misrepresentation in the recruitment, substitution of contracts, withholding of salaries and violations of regulations in the hiring of overseas workers.

The 26 nurses and physical therapists were recruited from Manila by SRA, finally the recruitment agency and the network of nursing homes in which they were assigned are owned by Ben Philippine, who is chief operating officer and managing partner of the Sentosa group.

The Filipino nurses and PTs claimed they were made to work for less than the salaries from those provided for in their contracts. Sentosa Care operates 14 nursing facilities in New York, recruiting nurses, physical therapists and caregivers, mostly from the Philippines.

Full disclosure

The complainants walked out of their jobs in April 2006 and were slapped with a $50-million damage suit by Sentosa Care for breach of contract, conspiracy and child endangerment. They pleaded not guilty at their arraignment last March.

Among those who were sued was Hosea Iñiguez, a medical doctor who topped the board exams in Manila but opted to go to the US to work on a nurse license of the higher pay.

Last week, the United States justice department dismissed a case filed by the 26 against Sentosa Care for alleged unfair immigration-related employment practices.

In her decision, Baldoz said SRA never deceived the complainants and that in all the advertisements for the jobs in the US, there was full disclosure of the corporate relationship between SRA and Sentosa Care LLC, as well as their affiliated companies, all belonging to the Sentosa Care Group.

On the issue that the nurses were made to work not as direct hires but as agency-employees, Baldoz said the nurses were agency hires, not direct hires, as "SRA is the local agency of the direct foreign principal which is Sentosa Care and its affiliated companies."

On the issue of contract substitution et al. scruples, the complainants claimed that they were made to work for another employer but the POEA found that they were actually transferred to other affiliated nursing facilities under the Sentosa Care Group, and that this was covered by the recruitment agreement that they signed.

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Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 2 ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A17 of the Autos the Nation section misstated the place where the photograph of fish guns was taken. The photo was taken in Obando, Bulacan—not Candaba, Pampanga.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 8 ISSUE, a Sports article on Page A27—"Pacquiao sharpens powerful right hook"—misstated the boxing title currently held by Manny Pacquiao. He is the World Boxing Council champion in the International super featherweight—not super flyweight—division.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 9 ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"GMA, Bush meet, finally"—misnamed the real estate of the controversial National Broadband Network contract. The contract is worth $329 million—not P330 million.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a front-page article—"Invented, Erap found to make history, build legacy"—misspelled the surname of a Filipino boxing icon. The boxer is Manny Pacquiao—not Paquiao.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for clarification of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 7th Floor, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati-Ave., Makati City, fax (fax. 897-47-42/94, e-mail address: dyfeed@inquirer.com.ph).

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Letters Editor, mail address: same as above, e-mail address: randerson@inquirer.com.ph or fax No. 897-87-50 to 59, loc. Readers' Advocate. For phone queries call 897-8000 local 382.

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*CAB Data July '06 - June '07

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Alagang Tunay,
Alagang BenLife

BENEFICIAL PHILIFE

2ND LT. JOSE EUGENIO VILLAVIL gets a warm welcome from his wife, Hazel, upon arrival at Navy headquarters in Manila after nine years of fighting insurgents in Mindanao and Palawan. In background is their son Jose Rodembie, 4. NOEL A. MORALEDA

Mindanao Marines retrain in Manila

TWO HUNDRED SOLDIERS FROM Marine Battalion Landing Team 10 (MBLT 10) arrived yesterday at Navy Headquarters in Manila to begin a six-month rehabilitation program, and to refurbish their equipment and armament.

MBLT 10 was given a hero's welcome by the Navy vice chief, Rear Admiral Amable Tolentino, who also conferred awards on 19 outstanding soldiers from the contingent.

The MBLT 10 commander, Marine Lt. Col. Ramon Wahidel Jr., Capt. Ismael Claus, Technical Sgt. Neil Demperverde and Staff Sgt. Raquel Alberto were awarded the Bronze Cross. For acts of heroism involving the risk of life during an operation that recovered several rounds of live ammunition and firearms from communist terrorist groups in Palawan," a statement from the Navy said.

Staff Sergeants Ricky Tolino and Milton Tiburcio and Cpl. Dennis Dalmacio received the Military Merit Medal.

Pfcs Ia. Miguel Perez, Ric Angelo Abreu and Pfc. Sobino Aragon were awarded the Military Commendation Medal for the recovery of two homemade shotguns, drug paraphernalia, communist propaganda materials, communication and subversive documents at the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The MBLT 10 has been deployed in southern Mindanao and Palawan for the past nine years, fighting extremist groups and insurgents, the Navy said.

The contingent will be replaced by the 9th MBLT which saw action in the latest military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf extremist group in Basilan, said Lt. Col. Ariel Caballero, Marine Corps public information officer.

A Marine battalion usually undergoes retraining every six or seven years, Caballero said.

In the 2000 campaign in Basilan-Jolo, Lanao del Norte, MBLT 10 captured the Camp Bilal complex in Mindanao, at the time the largest satellite camp of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which was fortified by 600 fully armed insurgents.

It also led in the clearing operations that reopened the Wao-Marawi-Pantao Highway.

MBLT 10 also led several campaigns against the Abu Sayyaf leadership, which was charged with kidnapping three Indonesians and beheading two Filipinos and two Americans.

The MBLT 10 was reassigned to Palawan last year, where it engaged several communist groups, aside from spearheading numerous community development projects with local government units.

Formerly the MBLT 11, the MBLT 10 was activated in 1990 and became the reserve unit of the Philippine Marines in Metro Manila against destabilization groups during the term of President Corazon Aquino.

It is dubbed up its three major achievements: Oplan Isagani when it quashed an uprising by the then group-size of Gregorio "Rodolfo Aguinaldo. But former Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Oscar Florendo was killed in the assault. —Willie Obiano

Air Force offers pilots incentives to remain

By Tina Quintanilla

IT MAY NEVER BE ABLE TO MATCH THE compensation offered by commercial airlines, but the Philippine Air Force (PAF) is not about to surrender and give up its pilots without a fight.

PAF chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Tolentino said the air Force has been drawing up programs to offer "nonmonetary incentives" to make sure pilots in a bid to remain PAF-trained fliers instead striking it rich in commercial airlines.

Recognizing how working for civilian aviation can be attractive to military pilots, Tolentino said the PAF was thinking of ways to compensate its pilots on top of their regular salaries.

"Serving [commercial] airlines is easy for control. When it comes to monetary benefits, we can't match that. But what we can do is compensate them in other aspects, what we call nonmonetary benefits, as we do like offering them boarding, schooling and on loans, if possible," he said.

The department of military pilots by commercial carriers has been a problem for the air Force whose trained pilots are known to leave after the obligatory eight years of service to serve in much for more remunerative airlines.

The PAF last year brought court martial proceedings against some of its pilots for going AWOL (absent without leave) to train as commercial pilots.

Others leave even before fulfilling the eight-year service requirement, opting to reimburse the DSF for the remainder of their time, Tolentino said.

"I do not have control over them if they want to leave, as long as they pay out proper ly... But it's not the pilots per se that is the problem, it's the experience that they have," said the PAF chief.

"Those who leave are the ones trained to be instructor pilots," he said.

Among the schemes being developed to offer to the pilots are free golf lessons and getting them home through a tie-up with The Armed Forces Honoring reunions.

The air force has 347 pilots, half of whom are in the active service, flying the PAF's modest fleet of fixed-wing planes and helicopters.

The PAF is set to acquire new helicopters, eleven assorted radar and military trainer jets. It has opened for bidding the procurement of new SIMC choppers and planes to boost its current UH-1H choppers and N22-C Nomads.

Three 39 (SIC Italian aircraft), made by Italian aircraft maker Aermacchi, are expected to be delivered within the year, along with MG-520 helicopters, which are eight-capable gun ships manufactured by McDonnell Douglas.

Customs foils onion smuggle try

TWO CONSIGNMENTS OF ONIONS VALUED AT over 95.2 million were seized by agents of the Bureau of Customs at the Port of Manila in the agency's intensified drive against smuggling.

Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service director James Papasotiou said the shipments, consigned to AOF Trading and Golden Shine Enterprises, were confiscated by CIIS operatives in separate operations after the consignments were found to have been misdeclared as garlic.

AOF Trading's shipment was seized on the order from the company's warehouse in Sta. Maria, Bulacan, following a tip that the firm had failed to obtain an import permit from the Bureau of Plant Industry Pagsanjan said.

He said the cargo, which arrived in Manila last week in two 40-foot containers, was declared by its importer to be garlic. The Port of Manila then released the P1.12-million shipment.

The Golden Shine Enterprises shipment was seized on Monday at the Manila port after it was found to also contain onions worth P95 million.

Papasotiou said the importer committed a "gross misdeclaration" and violated Section 2530 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines. Morgenca C. Dela

School kids to be given anticorruption lessons

By Jerry E. Esplanada

STRESSING THE NEED TO INCULCATE proper values in the young, the Department of Education has integrated integrity and corruption-resistance education curriculum.

The DepEd has distributed more than 200,000 copies of the new Draft and Corruption Prevention Education Teaching Exemplars or GCPETE to over 44,400 elementary and secondary schools nationwide.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus yesterday said the GCPETE project "is one of the thrusts" of the DepEd and reiterated the department's strong stand against all forms of graft and corruption.

The exemplars, which consist of 52 teaching modules, will complement the DepEd's strong antigraft and corruption measures, according to Lapus.

The GCPETE, a joint project of the DepEd and the Office of the Ombudsman, is funded by the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development.

The modules aim to "instill in our students the value of honesty, integrity, professionalism and simple living with the hope that these can help build a more honest, transparent and accountable government."

"Young students must be taught the values of honesty and integrity so that they can develop a consciousness and appreciation of graft and corruption prevention," Lapus told the bureau.

The DepEd chief formally launched the program early this year at the P. Burgos de Elementary School in Quezon City.

"As we look at ways of solving the many social woes that plague our country, we recognize the important role of education in characterizing our students to become true assets, instead of liabilities, in our quest for nation-building," Lapus said.

He cited several cases of honesty involving young school children, like 12-year-old Ms. Cristina Dagpayog who returned P100,000 to its rightful owner in January 2006, and five elementary and high school students from Lucena City who returned in October 2006 a wallet containing P48,000 to its owner.

"Their examples set the standard for integrity among us Filipinos. And the high standard must be applied at the DepEd since it is our responsibility to inculcate these values among our young," Lapus said.

Meanwhile, Ligaya Mojarlo, Olongapo City division superintendent, has disputed Lapus' claim that her assistant was placed under a 90-day preventive suspension for allegedly selling teaching positions.

Ligaya Moraes, Olongapo division superintendent, told the Inquirer that they had yet to receive the DepEd order suspending Narcisa Mendiol.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 12, 2007
23rd Week in Ordinary Time
1st Sunday: Col 3:1-11
Gospel: Luke 6:20-26

Lifting up his eyes to his disciples, Jesus said:

"Fortunate are you who are poor, the kingdom of God is yours.

Fortunate are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

Fortunate are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Fortunate are you when people hate you, when they reject you and insult you and slander you among criminals, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven. Remember, that is how the ancestors of this people treated the prophets.

But alas for you who have wealth, for you have been comforted now.

Alas for you who are full, for you will go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.

Alas for you when people speak well of you, for that is how the ancestors of these people treated the false prophets."

Commentary

Paul's letters are all written in the plural and we have a tendency to read them as if they were to us personally, rather than as a community of believers being called to live together and be accountable to each other. We are in Christ's company. Once we break the bread of life and the cup of truth with daily and we are laid dot with Christ in God. We are to daily live our baptismal promises and pray mutually over our evil, sin, injustice, and violence in our lives, and we are to make sure that we do not hinder others in living their baptismal vows. We are one to God, all of us every nationality, language, culture, gender, economic group, even religious persuasion and we are to be formed anew in the image of the one who created us all.

Our program of practice and being formed anew in heaven past, to hunger and thirst for justice and holiness (that are the same word), to cancel for and to compassionate with those who are suffering, and to rejoice if we are honored with persecution for the sake of the gospel and the love of Jesus. And we are to be careful not to be fooled among the rich and respectable, those who are full and do not thirst, those who live without care of the pain of others, and those who court prophets who tell you what you want to hear. Are we as Church among the blessed or have we become like those who think you can have it all?

Claretian Publications, P. O. Box 3191, 1099 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Tel. 372-3033, Fax 372-3034, E-mail: cpi@claret.org, Website: http://www.claret.org/cpi/ Publisher: Fr. Gerardo Limpoco, CMF. Editor: Fr. Clarence Devanadera, CMF.

'Salamat sa Desisyon ng Korte Suprema 13-0'

Smokey Mountain then

Four Philippine Presidents have put in their mark on the Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project (SMRDP).

All poured in essential support needed during their term to provide decent homes to a community of garbage dumpsite scavengers and renew the environment in the Tondo foreshore land, known as the Smokey Mountain.

With the Smokey Mountain etched fresh in the world's mind as symbol of urban decay, former President Cory Aquino initiated in 1988 a comprehensive waste management plan for Metro Manila, with the SMRDP as one of the resultant projects.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos firmed up the joint venture agreement covering the project and set forth the 79-hectare reclamation of foreshore land as its enabling component.

With work in progress, former President Joseph Estrada undertook the SMRDP as one of his administration's flagship programs for the poor and for environment management.

Then, in 2003, H. E. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo turned over to 2,520 SMRDP beneficiary-families their housing units in 21 medium-rise residential buildings.

On Aug 15, 2007, the Supreme Court declared the legality of the Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project (SMRDP). Thirteen High Court justices voted on its validity while two other justices inhibited themselves from voting.

Smokey Mountain rule reopens fresh prospects for new wealth and relieving miseries of the poor ***–FVR***

Smokey Mountain now

In a column by former President Ramos, dated Aug. 26, 2007 and which appeared in the Manila Bulletin, he hails the High Court decision and declares:

"Fresh prospects to create new wealth – on the part of both Government and the private sector – have just been reopened which can attract a big wave of investments and generate hundreds of thousands of jobs for indigent Filipinos."

He sees the decision as a judicial move that spurs the cleaning up of more "Smokey Mountains" in the Philippines. Calling for more legislation on reclamation, he also sees renewed vigor in the use of reclamation for the creation of new wealth benefiting foreshore communities.

Prosecute poachers, conservation group urges

By TJ Burgonio

THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF) is alarmed over the rising incidence of poaching in Mindanao waters by Chinese fishermen, and wants the government to exercise firm resolve in pursuing cases against the poachers.

The authorities rounded up 19 Chinese fishermen after an inspection of their boat, situated in remote mar. khalo in the Sulu archipelago, led to the discovery of tons of dead turtles.

The government agents found 50 dried and 98 freshly-gutted turtles, and 28 living turtles on the unmarked vessel. Most of them were given sea turtles, internationally classified as endangered species, WWF said.

The boat allegedly dropped that 200 adult turtles and 10,000 eggs were killed. A pair of live pelagic flatsober shards, classified as vulnerable, were also found in the boat's holding tanks, the conservation group said.

The boat and crew were escorted to Bongao, capital of Tawi-Tawi, where they were charged with violation of the Philippine Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act.

"This is by no means the first time that foreign nationals encroached upon Philippine waters to plunder our nation's rich but dwindling marine resources," said WWF Tawi-Tawi project manager Filemon Elnar in a statement.

The authorities arrested the Chinese crew of the M/V Hui Sha Jiang vessel after it was caught poaching Napoleon wrasse off Palmaris Reef in December 2006. The case remains pending, according to the conservation group.

Two months earlier, 24 Chinese fishermen aboard the M/V Jiayuli 986 fishing were caught poaching off Manguan Island in Palawan. The prosecutors initially dismissed the case, but later reversed themselves, it said.

Great sign

"This is a great sign. While we are not lacking in environmental laws, enforcement is poor and will remain so as many cases through, it leaves much to be desired. WWF is hopeful that the accused finally get what's due them," Batinero said.

Only one case—the arrest of 17 Chinese poachers caught with 54 dead turtles—has led to a conviction, but they were pardoned after paying fines "in order not to strain relations between the Philippines and China," according to WWF.

"WWF hopes that the Philippine government will finally have the resolve to dispense justice against foreign poachers who disregard territorial and international laws," it said.

Since the past nine years, more than 900 foreigners, including at least 600 from China, have been arrested and charged with poaching in the waters of Palawan.

WWF said it would closely monitor this latest case to ensure that justice is served.

'You've just won UK lottery–not!'

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN MANILA HAS warned Filipinos about an Internet lottery scam perpetrated since mail and purporting to be part of the national lottery in the United Kingdom.

The embassy issued the warning after receiving numerous inquiries from people in the Philippines who had received an e-mail telling them they had won a very large sum of money.

"Recipients of such e-mails should be very careful. They are usually followed by another e-mail asking for a large sum of money (usually several hundred pounds) in payment of a fee or other charge. This is a scam designed to get your money," the embassy said.

The e-mail usually asks a supposed winner for his credit card number so they could process a $US fee.

The scheme is also being done by post, with copies of the supposed raffle entries attached, the embassy said.

Reports on Internet lottery scams say the scam is basically a "phishing" expedition.

The reason: that if a recipient responds to the e-mail, the perpetrators of the scam send them further messages or even contact them by phone in an attempt to draw them deeper into the scam.

Most of the time, recipients are asked to provide banking details, plenty of personal information, and even copies of driver's licenses or passports.

Some of the lottery scams have been identified as Megalotteries Lottery, Utility Trust Agency, Real Exchange Lotto Promo, Partygate Email Lotto International Programme, Mega Lottery International, World Wide International Grand Lottery, Fortune International Lottery, El Gordo Spanish Partypromo and Superwinners Promo Lottery.

Naia ready for new readable passports

By Tarra Quismundo

IMMIGRATION CONFUSION At the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) are almost ready for the country's shift to machine-readable passports (MRPs) which will speed up the processing of departing and arriving passengers, the airport's immigration chief said yesterday.

Airport immigration supervisor Ferdinand Sampol said yesterday that Bureau of Immigration officers at Naia terminals were already using a few more technical upgrades.

"We are actually ready because our immigration office has been serving all nationalities, and most of them already carry machine-readable passports. So we welcome this development because this will allow us to process Filipinos faster," said Sampol.

The Department of Foreign Affairs recently announced that Filipinos overseas receiving their passports may avail themselves of the transient MRP by Sept. 17. First-time applicants will have to settle for the more costly read-green passports for the meantime.

With the Philippines using MRPs like most countries in the world, Sampol said the processing time for passport holders may be cut by "plus or minus 15 seconds." He said processing of the machine-read green passports took 45 seconds to do at most.

2 marriages of convenience lead to arrest

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Tarra Quismundo

FOR TWO INDIAN NATIONALS, THEIR marriages were not exactly made in heaven.

Operatives of the Bureau of Immigration yesterday arrested Paunee Kumar, 32, and Bhutal Kaur Singh, 32, for marrying Filipina women in order to acquire resident visas in the country.

Kumar and Singh were both nabbed in their homes in La Loma, Quezon City until Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan.

Libanan, who issued the mission order, said Kumar was the subject of a deportation complaint filed by former BI associate commissioner Orlando Mercado.

"The two Indians will both undergo deportation proceedings for being undesirable aliens as they acquired resident visas by means of fraud and misrepresentation," Libanan said.

The immigration chief added: "We are warning other foreigners not to contract a 'marriage of convenience' to acquire legal residence here as their visas can be cancelled at anytime and they will be arrested and deported."

According to BI technical assistant for intelligence Victor Boco, it was Dizon who informed Libanan of Kumar's case.

Already married

Dizon said the Bihad granted Kumar a temporary resident visa by reason of his supposed marriage to Mary Jean Dizon, a Filipina.

The former BI official pointed out that Kumar was already married to an Indian woman named Jasvirkaur Dawra who arrived in the country on July 5, 2006.

"Kumar and Dizon's marriage certificate may either be one of convenience or an error [on] his part," Dizon said.

As for Singh, Boco said it was rumored that the Indian national had introduced to acquire a five-year temporary visa although he arrived in the country only in March.

"The rumor that he met and married his Filipina wife in such a short time," Boco said.

Immigration were also verifying the authenticity of the entry visa that was stamped on Singh's passport.

Meanwhile, Benji Fukuda, a 62-year-old Japanese citizen, was arrested Monday night after landing he at least in the order of Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2.

Naia immigration operatives Ferdinand Sampol and Fukuda, whose name was on the SI blacklist, had just arrived from Jakarta, Indonesia, via Philippine Airlines flight PR 509 when he allegedly tried to elude immigration officers.

BI operatives had been on standby at the terminal awaiting the arrival of Fukuda, who was deported from the Philippines last year but managed to continue flying in and out of Manila.

"There was one passenger from the flight [from Jakarta] who did not pass through the immigration counter. Mr. Sampol that it was him [and] our agents looked for him," he continued.

Fukuda was found hiding in the men's room in the arrivals area an hour later.

Remember JR? She tried to see 'papa' Erap but...

By Nancy Carvajal

"HE WILL BE ACQUITTED BY... mean the charges against my papa were exaggerated," said Jinggoy Estrada Sison "JV" Ejercito Estrada.

Although she has not been recognized by former President Joseph Estrada as his daughter, JV said she always prays for her father's acquittal.

JV hit the news in 1999 when her mother, Rose Ejercito, famed for refurnishing Estrada's office, was at the time still in office.

Estrada, through his spokesperson Rey Marquez, denied the allegation that Rose refurnished Estrada's office.

JV, now 26 and married to an Iranian, Ahmed Ibid, tried to visit the former President yesterday. She also brought along her friends—Bianca Roxas, but failed to see Estrada.

It was her second attempt to see him—the first time was in 2000.

"I was told I could not enter because I was not on the list of his immediate family," JV said, adding not to cry when she received the news.

She eventually broke into tears, after hearing Estrada's secretary tell Steve Stallman of GMA 7 why she was not allowed by the police guards to enter the compound.

Wrong timing

The 5-foot-6-inch former beauty queen who "has the eyes of the Ejercitos" said: "I just wanted to wish him well before the verdict. Maybe my timing was wrong."

She said she hoped she would be given a chance to straighten things out with the former President when she submitted the bail bond in the past.

"In the past, I said hurtful things against him, to get back at him for denying (I am his daughter). I was hurt, but now, I hope I'd have a chance to see him, if not as a daughter, perhaps as a fan," JR said.

She said she wanted to see her father before the Sandiganbayan released its verdict, not to get an unsolicited in show her support.

Licensed engineer

"I'm comfortable with my life now. I finished college without support from my father and I accomplished something for myself, but I feel it's not complete," said JR, now a licensed civil engineer working for a construction company at Ortigas Center.

"I want closure. I want to patch things up with my papa and I feel now is the right time to do it," she added.

JR said there had been offers for her to star in a movie after she came out with her story but she vowed there will down because it was not what she wanted.

"I can no longer be accused of eyeing or exploiting or say being a daughter of the President," she said.

3 justices hold Estrada's fate in their hands, under tight security

Front page 1

But there were no threats against them.

De Castro and Villaruz, a former director of the Securities and Exchange Commission, are personal candidates for Supreme Court seats, one of which will be vacant next month when associate Justice Cecilia Garcia-Davis retires.

The third magistrate, Peralta, has been touted as the "plunder judge."

He made headlines six years ago when he sentenced Dominic Mendiola, a cousin of the then-Secretary of Internal Revenue, to two life terms for economic plunder—the first such conviction since plunder was established as a crime in 1991.

Mendiola was found guilty of diverting more than P200 million to withholding tax payments on raw land assessments from 1996 to 1997, which she later withdrew.

Ubiera withheld details about the security measures for the three justices and just said they were "very well secured."

GMA appointees

Two of the three magistrates were appointees of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The lone exception is De Castro, who was appointed to the Sandiganbayan by then President Fidel Ramos.

Peralta was appointed to the Sandiganbayan in July 2002.

Currently a senior member of the Second Division, Villaruz was appointed to the Sandiganbayan on Oct. 8, 2001—six months after the Ombudsman filed the plunder and perjury cases against Estrada. Villaruz succeeded Reggie Erendo, Charlie "Nong" Ang and lawyer Edward Serapio.

She other second remains at large.

Unanimous vote needed

The Sandiganbayan has a total of 15 justices distributed over five divisions. It tries criminal and civil cases involving graft and corrupt practices committed by public officers and employees.

Three justices comprise each division.

Under the rules, a unanimous vote of the three justices is needed to reach a verdict. Failing that, the division can get two more justices from another division and reconstitute themselves into a five-member panel to break the deadlock.

In that setup, only a majority vote is needed to result a verdict.

7 justices in all

Besides being the assigned court's presiding judge, De Castro is also the concurrent chair of the First Division, where Estrada's case is pending.

Alongside seven justices, two ombudsmen, two sets of prosecutors and defense lawyers handled the Estrada case during its six-year run.

Of the seven justices, it was only De Castro who refused to inhibit herself from hearing part of the original Third Division which handled the trial when it started in April 2001.

De Castro served for six years as a senior state prosecutor and chief of the legal staff of the Department of Justice before moving up to the Sandiganbayan.

The Third Division was then chaired by Associate Justice Anselmo Rabaq, with De Castro and Associate Justice Ricardo Tuzon as members.

The head to create a special court arose when the Third Division lost one of its three magistrates.

The Special Division was created in January 2002 with Associate Minita Chico-Nazario as chair and Associate Justices Ildefonso Bautista and De Castro as members.

Nazario assumed the post of presiding justice in 2001 following the resignation of the late Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena.

With Nazario's elevation to the Supreme Court in 2004, Sandoval became chair of the special court with Villaruz as a member.

Prosecution team

De Castro became the Special Division chair after Sandoval withdrew from the special court.

The five-bank of prosecutors in the Estrada trial was headed by former Ombudsman Aniano Desierto. The others included Special Prosecutor Leonardo Tampis, Deputy Special Prosecutor Robert Kallos, Director Raymundo Olaguer, prosecutors Antonio Montalan, Humphrey Mayuyon and Julio Trinidad.

When Tampis retired, then Social Welfare Undersecretary Dennis Villa-Ignacio and Health Undersecretary Mita Pardilla joined the prosecution panel.

Villa-Ignacio later became the special prosecutor.

Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Fadullon, Prosecutor Ibrahim Lawrence Chua Cheng V and Secretary Pharris Laphan and Khrix Chua later made up the second batch.

ALL EYES on the three justices of the antigraft court's special division that brings the first-ever case against a former President to its conclusion today. From left, Justices Francisco H. Villaruz Jr., Teresita J. Leonardo-De Castro and Diosdado M. Peralta.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is also part of the prosecution panel but has not appeared in court since her appointment as Ombudsman.

Highpowered defense lawyers

High-powered lawyers make up Estrada's defense team.

They include former Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza, former Sen. Serge Jugeing, former Manila Prosecutor Jose Flaminiano and son Jay Bayrond Estrada, Cheda Villaraleza and Atona Lim Logan.

Retired Supreme Court Justice Vicente Cayetano, UP College of Law dean Pacifico Agabin, Fr. Ex Cortes and Bella Fortuno also helped in the defense in the earlier part of the trial—before Estrada commanded the services of all his lawyers with the secession of the Special Division.

Other Estrada lawyers who served Estrada briefly included former Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Manuel Barcelona, private lawyers Prospero Cawaling, Jesse Jacado, Public Attorney's Office chief Persida Acosta and PAO lawyers Antonio Arellano, Joel Bocaya, Atty. Melita Lauron, Silvestre Mojica, Prudencio Sandino III, Wil. Pedro Andres, Dexie Co, and Marlene Usita Jr.

Retired Chief Justice Andres Narvasa was as Estrada's legal adviser.

Up to defense lawyers to prolong agony of their client

Front page 1

positive portion," which means whether the verdict is convict or acquittal.)

Ubiera said up to four lawyers had been assigned to take home reading the verdict, in case three would be a bail reading.

Those seats facing the bench will be reportedly placed at the center of the rows from aisle for Estrada, his concerned one lien, Jinggoy Estrada and his lawyer Edward Serapio.

For security and order, the maximum gallery will accommodate only 125 people, Ubiera said.

Other cameras or media recording devices are prohibited, and banned beverages are banned.

Ubiera said the Estrada camp had asked that at least 26 seats be reserved for the ex-President's family and supporters, including former members of the Cabinet.

Senator Estrada, who has been out on bail since 2001, also made a separate request for seats for seven of his colleagues in the Senate.

The Office of the Ombudsman, the agency that prosecuted Estrada, assists as many as 37 seats. Its "guest" list includes Luis "Chavit" Singson, Estrada's nemesis and the prosecution star witness.

24-hour security

According to Ubiera, the three justices deciding Estrada's fate have been under 24-hour security "for the last 18 days" and will remain so for several days after judgment day, "depending on our assessment."

The Special Division is the maximum gallery to

A. Benusa; 51

LAWYER ALLAN F. Benusa of Baliuag, Bulacan, died on Sept. 7 after suffering a head attack. He was 51.

A graduate of Meridian Mission Academy, Asian International School and Ateneo de Manila University, he was a former executive vice president of the Land Bank of the Philippines.

He is survived by his wife Elvira Lleverag-Benusa; children Ronald Allan, Cheraldin, Allan Anthony and Edgar Allan; sisters Rosella S. Pogoda and Rebecca Cecile and brothers Cesar and Edwin Jacinto, Edison and Cil.

His remains lie in state at Angeles Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Cremation is on Tuesday morning.

9/11 shot takes toll on woman photographer

Photograph A1

was the only known picture of that ominous gray cloud...and the first shot after Flight 93 crashed—Ms. Cranbery thought she was still doing the right thing when she gave copies to people who asked for them, and to newspapers and television stations over it.

But later for the photo has had an unexpected cost for the photographer.

"Every time I've done any stories it goes online and all these conspiracy theorists start up and they call me and harass me," said McCranbery, 31, who teaches real estate computer

In numerous online postings, critics have ripped apart every element of the photo—and Ms. Cranbery's life. They accuse her of faking the photo, of profiteering from it and of being part of a conspiracy to cover up the fact that Flight 93 was shot down by the government.

They claim the mushroom cloud is from an ordnance blast, not a jet crashing; the cloud is the wrong color for burning jet fuel; the cloud is too small and in the wrong position.

"It's just gotten so bad, I'm just fed up with it," Ms. Cranbery said. "This thing has become too much of a distraction in my life. I have a husband and a new business on deal with, too."

No reason to doubt it

The FBI, the Smithsonian Institution—which used the photo in an exhibition on Sept. 11—and the National Park Service's Flight 93 National Memorial—which has used the photo in pamphlets...all consider the photo legitimate.

"We have no reason to doubt it," said Bill Crumley, an agent who is a spokesperson for the Pittsburgh FBI office, which oversaw evidence collection in Shanksville.

From the beginning, McCranbery said, she asked to use the photograph to help remember the 40 passengers on Flight 93.

She sells copies to people and lets them choose whether $10 of the $20 fee goes to the Flight 93 National Memorial or the Intrepid Classics organization (formerly the Todd Beamer Foundation).

Sued AP

To ensure that the controlled distribution of the photograph, she copyrighted in January 2002.

"It protects the integrity of the photo," McCranbery said, she filed suit in 2005 against The Associated Press, saying that it violated her copyright by distributing the photo to its clients as part of a story. The lawsuit is pending. New York Times News Service

VIEW OF GROUND ZERO from where the World Trade Center once towered above the rest in New York City is photographed a day before the sixth anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001. In a new video, al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden predicts an escalation of the Iraq war. AP

NO PHOTO LIKE NEEDED to remind people what happened in New York City six years ago. It is etched in the memory of the world. AP/FILE

HONOR ROLL: A sign bears all the names of the more than 2,800 people who perished in the suicide attacks. AP

Acquittal in 'unusual' case is trouble for GMA

From page A1

unusual case in that one of those who decided to get rid of him in 2001 was the Supreme Court itself in a rule that was never designed to be its own."

But if an acquittal is one consideration, Sagalongos said it wouldn't validate the idea that a sitting president, especially someone like Estrada who had an overwhelming mandate, was not supposed to be ousted by "mob rule."

"The ensuing world was amazed," Sagalongos said. "Unlike the first People Power which enjoyed wide support, the events in 2001 were accepted by much of the civilized world."

Sagalong said it was unlikely that either the prosecution or defense would score a "grand slam," meaning a sweeping conviction or acquittal on all four cases against Estrada.

"It could be somewhere in between," he said. "But we feel that his guilt was never proven."

But Rep. Teodoro Casiño of the leftist Bayan Muna said an acquittal should not be directly connected to GMA II.

"An acquittal may mean simply that the prosecution bungled its case," he said.

Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel, whose militant Akbayan group was among those that rallied for the ouster of Estrada, expressed indifference to the Sandiganbayan verdict.

Baraquel said the trial "has long ceased to be a case determining Estrada's accountability and has become about (President Macapagal-Arroyo's) political survival."

Ultimate losers

"(Ms Arroyo), due to her choice to shore up her legitimacy and survive the political crisis, forgoes her genuine (but) credibility and integrity of the (anti-)graftbuster as an institution," she said.

"The vulnerabilities of the administration has determined the conduct of administration relative to the case, thus tainting the credibility of the ruling," Baraquel said.

Expressing a contention, the lawmaker said the verdict should reach the Supreme Court if only to "lend to an acceptable closure to the case."

Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Lingayen said Erap-ean said today's verdict would be a "political decision made of 'us four' and 'yes three,' which will make practically everybody unhappy."

Who's more guilty?

"It will be the people of the Philippines, who are already poor and miserable, who are the ultimate losers in the Estrada case and the Ms Arroyo dilemma. How true is the saying that when dogs fight, the grass under them loses. Or," Cruz said in an interview yesterday and in a statement posted on his blog (www.oscarmcruz.com).

If Estrada is found guilty, "how could a glorious semestral (Ms Arroyo) rejoice when the Filipinos, by and large, consider her more guilty of bigger and more public anomalies than the person accused," Cruz said.

On the other hand, if Estrada is acquitted, "how would people react to/and the same someone who unequivocally took over the government by perceived questionable means, not once in 2001 but the second time around by 2004," he asked.

"In other words, the already long running divorce and elegant consort the present national leadership cannot but become more felt and expressed on the forthcoming resolution of the Erap case—(regardless) of whether the accused is found guilty or otherwise." With reports from Rosarlyn F. Sarmiento and Rolando Estoc-Patricia, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Girl who got 3-hr Erap interview won't judge him

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE 13-YEAR-OLD GIRL WHO ONCE INterviewed Joseph Estrada for a school project had kept a distant interest in his plunder trial.

"I didn't really follow it that well, only when I got the chance," Brendale Rose Wee Eng, now 15, told the Inquirer yesterday.

But with the verdict expected today, Wee Eng called on other Filipinos much older and experienced than she to be levelheaded about it.

"I think everybody should respect the verdict, whatever it turns out [to be]. It is the law," she said.

Wee Eng said she did not want to rely too much on media reports to make a stand on Estrada's guilt or innocence.

"Over the years, I got information from the media. But I think the media are not that accurate. I don't want to base [my stand] on just that," she said.

According to Wee Eng, it was the not negative side of Estrada's trial that was highlighted by the media. She said she was not made fully aware of the ousted President's positive aspects.

Friendly

Now in her junior year at the MGC New Life Christian Academy in Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay, Tagaytay City, Wee Eng recalled Estrada as "very friendly and generous."

So generous, she said, that he took three hours to regale her with stories of his childhood.

"I was allowed [by the Sandiganbayan] to talk to him for only 20 minutes. But he was very generous; we talked for three hours," she said in a phone interview.

At that time, Wee Eng was a sixth grader at the former Makati Gospel Christian Academy.

She went to the interview—part of a project for her English class, which involved interviewing a personality and writing a report—accompanied by her mom Jhoda, sister Rochelle, cousin Mark Henry Go and mother Maryann Popoy.

Out of the ordinary

"I wanted someone out of the ordinary," Wee Eng said when asked why she chose Estrada for her subject.

She said that during a talk with her family at home, her mother suggested the ex-President as a subject. She then wrote the Sandiganbayan seeking permission to see Estrada at his mansion-cum-zoo in Tanay, Rizal.

Wee Eng was aware of the circumstances that landed him in jail, and was not allowed by the court to ask anything related to the cases ongoing plunder trial.

Thus, she and her subject talked at length about his childhood, his work (the Senate and the town), and his hobbies in school.

"He was very [unintelligible]. He fixated more on his role/ teachers and his good [unintelligible]. He even told a story about how he had defended a friend from a bully," she recalled.

Wee Eng said that despite the rumors of his shortcomings, she felt comfortable in his presence.

ISSN 0116-2442 INQUIRER MICRO-ADV. 270

OPINION

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Both sides guilty

IT'S BEEN THE BATTLE OF THE ICONS LEADING UP to today. Yesterday, a full-page ad, signed by society matrons who have been busy signing pro-administration manifestos since 2005, came out with another signed statement appealing to the public to respect the Sandiganbayan's verdict. Their ad was plastered with pictures of Imaldonia Cardinal Rosales, former President Fidel V. Ramos and Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita de Castro.

EDITORIAL

The camp of former President Joseph Estrada did its share. The ex-President himself greeted that he was prepared to endure imprisonment in Muntinlupa. Sen. Jinggoy Estrada speculated on an unfavorable verdict. The defendant's camp certainly did its share of trying to condition the public mind, including applying for a series of bail petitions.

Fortress Malacañang has been on pins and needles for weeks now, maneuvering both publicly and behind the scenes to diminish the impact of whatever verdict the Sandiganbayan hands down. On one hand, it has pulled out all the stops to project power. That projection ranges from the Presidential Security Group not only being in full battle gear for some time now, but its commanders remaining in the Palace compound even when the President went abroad.

On the other hand, its efforts to project a sense of unassailable armed strength have been belied by its dangling a proposal for an amnesty. As proposed, we've pointed out in the past, that has been used for its own purposes by Estrada's partisans, even though Estrada himself has gone through the motions of saying he'd refuse any pardon or amnesty offer.

The result has been a country—including the financial markets—nervously awaiting a verdict, while the Palace and Estrada's people work to undercut both the actual verdict and its effects on the defendants. Both sides, it bears repeating, have thus tried to undercut the court. Just as they systematically tried to undercut the trial itself, including dragging it out, which delayed the delivery of justice but gave both sides additional room for political maneuvering. Central to both administration and Estrada loyalist thinking was projecting the case as a rallying point for the faithful, instead of acknowledging that the justice system represented the best way to secure the interests of the citizenry as a whole.

Ferdinand Marcos might have escaped the long arm of the law. His disgrace, however, ruined the bar with regard to the accountability of all his successors. Before Marcos, there was no crime called plunder. Since 1991, plunder as a capital crime has become a Damocles' sword hanging over the head of every president of the republic.

The two former presidents of South Korea, Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, caused a sensation in Asia when they were convicted and imprisoned for acts committed during their terms. Both served only a year in jail, receiving a pardon from President Kim Dae-jung as an act of national reconciliation. The Philippines had a golden opportunity to match the symbolic impact of the conviction of two former presidents in a sister democracy. Sadly, today, our country has to confront the reality that far too many, the process has been so rancid as to deny the broader public a sense of satisfaction, whatever the verdict might be.

It will be premature to say anything concerning the verdict. We can only hope that the public will be pleasantly surprised by the Sandiganbayan decision. Just as the Supreme Court has managed to pull the nation back from the brink, despite the at times collective madness of the executive and legislative branches, so, too, may the Sandiganbayan assure the public with a demonstration of the fearless and impartial application of the law.

If not, both prosecution and defense can still file an appeal before the Supreme Court. What the administration and opposition surely deserve censure for, even at this point, is how they both tried to turn what could have been an impartial trial into a never-ending series of opportunities to persuade, and thus politicize, the law. They will always be guilty of that.

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'Mother of all land titling scandals'

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE SUPREME COURT IN BANC HEARD oral arguments for and against motions to help retain or prolong land speculating four Metro Manila cities: Quezon, Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela. The Court will have to decide which of two original certificates of title (OCTs) dating back to 1917 both numbered 994, and each validly functions of transfer certificates of titles have continued to authentic. The decision will finally settle what the late Chief Justice and former President Marcelo Fernan described as "the mother of all land title scandals in the country." Fernan, who was chairman of the Senate blue ribbon committee, together with the committee on urban planning and housing committee, investigated the Manila Bank case.

The scandal started in 1962 when Caloocan City register of deeds Rolando Alfonso, together with assistant register of deeds Serafin Vasquez Jr., allowed the change of registration date of an original certificate of title (OCT) of Manila Bank, making it appear that there were two such titles to the same huge track of land spanning portions of the four cities and affecting hundreds of thousands of residents and businessmen from Sangandaan all the way to Monumento in Caloocan, up to Bahaynonada in Quezon City, including portions of the Tondo foreshore area. Alfonso and Vasquez fraudulently in Malabon. Then two OCTs—OCT 994 issued on April 19, 1917 and OCT 994 issued on May 3, 1917—were the same parcel of land. Ironically, it was the Supreme Court itself that made the confusion worse by, ruling in a 1921 decision, the existence of two OCTs and ruling that the OCT issued April 19, 1917, being issued earlier than the OCT dated May 3, 1917 was the superior and valid title. Thus, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) lost its huge claim. In Caloocan under a three-decade-old TCT originating from OCT 994 of May 3, 1917, to a claimant whose title originated from OCT 994 dated April 1917, but a technical pleading by the Land Registration Authority (LRA) showed that the claimant's "lot" was located more than 12,000 meters away from the MWSS property. This decision wreaked havoc on the country's land-titling system.

Then Justice Secretary Teofisto Guingona formed a fact-finding inter-agency committee chaired by Undersecretary Rolando Espinosa, now in The investigation found that OCT 994 dated April 19, 1917 was not existent for being "a fabrication" by Alfonso and Vasquez who "acted maliciously fraudulently and in bad faith" when they signed a TCT in the name of a person bearing a very dubious registration.

The investigation report said Alfonso's "negligence in the discharge of the duties of registration of OCT 994 is the root" of a system as well as lax act of deliberately ignoring the legal safeguards, especially her failure to require the presentation of a subdivision plan duly approved by the DENR or by the Land Management Bureau, had the duties of the applicant, set sufficient basis to find her guilty of grave misconduct. Persistent enough Estrada dismissed Alfonso and Vasquez for gross misconduct and dishonesty.

The dismissals were affirmed by the Supreme Court's associate justice Conchita Carpio Morales, who wrote the decision for the second division, stressed: "By failing to prevent the irregularity that she (Alfonso) had reason to suspect all along or to take immediate steps to correct it, she failed to exercise the same care and diligence it is normally expected of her under the circumstances." Sadly that condition continues to rule to this day.

The foreshore of OCT 994 dated April 19, 1917 has a bearing on the unending by the Court of the vast Manila Bayan to its rightful owners. The estate is being contested by claimants using the two OCTs: Manuel Bonoy and Real Estate Corp. and dozens that sons of Agriculture inc., which use OCT 994 dated May 3, 1917 as basis for their claim of ownership, and the late Jose Dimson and his associate, GT Development Corp., who use OCT 994 dated April 18, 1917 as their legal basis.

An adverse decision based on the false OCT would set a precedent that would endanger the rights of the rest of the country's legitimate land-title holders and the integrity of the country's land titles.

The Monteverde and Ali have been in possession, continuous and legal possession of the Manila Bayan since the 1960s. But some time in the 1960s, Dimson filed a case to claim ownership of the vast estate, using as basis his spurious OCT 994 dated April 19, 1917. Dimson was said to be a lawyer of his. Companion to Alfredo grandchild, Bernardino Rivera, and as prominent Filipino services rendered, the latter was given a deed of conveyance of 25 percent of his share of the Manila Bayan.

Then Pasig Judge Cecilia Muñoz Palma conferred the conveyance for likelihood the annulment of property and title to Dimson and Gt Development Corp. Despite the irregularity and without the presentation of the original of OCT 994 and the subdivision plan approved by the LRA or the Bureau of Lands, Caloocan Judge Reynaldo Nepomuceno of Dimson's motion and issued in his favor TCT 13349 covering 800,000 sq m of Lot 23-A-2-of the Manila Bayan. This is to the property involved in the TCT of the MR.

(To be continued)

Day of reckoning

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY.

If the government that came after Erap had been reasonably close to the virtuous of Fidel, we would have no problem with the Sandiganbayan verdict today. If Erap were found innocent, there we would conclude somehow with the thought that there's just the way democracy is, rain some, sun some, the sweeping defeat of justice is made up by the victory of a sovereign of the judicial process. If Erap were found guilty, there we would be filled with the euphoria of another Edsa and proclaim to ourselves and to the world that justice is done, we have closure, we can move on.

But the GMA administration did not, and there's one very big rub.

You put a cloak on the history of odious judges, and you'll accept his or her decision however it goes. You put a cloak on the history of a venerable judge, and you will reject his or her decision however it goes. So, more than that, you put a cloak on the history of a sweeping judge, and you know what the judged deserves to be judged. You put a cloak on the history of a sweeping judge, and you know that he judge ought to be judged.

As I've said in previous columns, Erap's case is no longer about Erap. It is about GMA. That's the irony and tragedy of Edsa II. Seven years after the fact, Erap is no longer the issue. The issue is GMA, Erap looms enormous in defeat.

Yes, tomorrow, I don't see how he can lose today.

At the very least, today's verdict cleans him back to square one. So long as he was not convicted with his case still pending, he was perfectly malleable, or at least vulnerable. He would be presented to make all sorts of compromises with the government, aimed in an small way for his removal precisely for a compromise. If not exhaustive, illogical, that if his team starts six any indictment, not least throwing his support behind the one person who impeached him in the House, who is blamed till, to be convicted, and who is the only one who can still. Either that or he's just not very bright.

More to the point, as long as he was in detention with his case still pending, he could be diverted to the background and consigned to semi-oblivion. Over the past few years, Erap has flown very low on the public radar, appearing up in a few short only during elections, or birthdays, anniversaries and brief appearances in court. He flew on life but was kept securely anchored by media. Today if the pro-Erap journalists that have descended on this country since 2001 were to go back to their old jobs in the public eye, for how long, given that it's a young church in disarray, the media or Filipino public's attention span?

Depends on the verdict. But either way, it doesn't bode well for government.

If Erap is found innocent, then it frees him to rally the opposition—or the major part of the opposition—around him. He has the money and the convincing, if extremely crossed, appeal to the masses. He has the ability to get media access to media and also openly court them. If the media themselves do not naturally gravitate to him after he becomes a free man.

Inflation starts impressively. If he

Few Erap loyalists to man the barricades

THE HIGH DRAMA OF THE 2005 CLIMACTIC termination of the impeachment trial of Joseph Ejercito Estrada (better known as Erap) and the ensuing court saga of a long running political soap opera like today as the Sandiganbayan hands down a verdict on the P4-billion plunder case against the ousted president.

The case is only part complainer, after six years of trial, what was shorted of the impeachment trial when senator-judges, over 13-10 vote, succeeded in preventing the opening of a crucial evidence, a second bank account containing the greater bulk of the P545 million in which Erap allegedly signed the name Jose Velarde. Among the reasons why senator-judges defeated Estrada during the vote were Jose Jinggoy Estrada stating the word over Jose Velarde Estrada and Mr. Jose Velarde Estrada's statement of not wanting to publicly expose his name when it should be his signature in question.

The impeachment trial lasted no more than 40 days, after then Senate Sen. Loi. Lacson Sinpson denounced Estrada for allegedly receiving various kinds of bribes in illegal jueteng payoffs between November 1998 to August 2000, and no, those 40 days contained the allegation of the unconstitutionally perceived government business and deliberated plunged the nation more than any other national crisis that preceded the nation more than any other national crisis that preceded the nation more than any other national crisis that preceded

Telling the truth has a price

"YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE truth!" was the famous line of renowned actor Jack Nicholson in the award-winning movie "A few Good Men." Perhaps no one can handle the truth but, at least, the truth can be admitted in all candor and fairness. But who is telling the truth? The people in the government or the masses?

When asked by a reporter for comment about the doubts and disbelief of the "masses" during the press conference announcing a 7.5 percent growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the second quarter of 2007, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo retorted: "Are you saying that our statistics ... the NSCB ... people are liars?" According to her, massive additional tax to what's rewing up the economy. ("GMA shows famous remark," Inquirer, 8/31/07)

And there they go again, statistics and nothing but statistics. I cannot help but think that the "growth" is only for the rich and the famous. Who do you think benefited from the "massive infrastructure"—the masses who have no goods to transport, or the proper proponents, approving authorities and contractors?

In this country, members of the Cabinet and government officials are barred by circumstances to submit only positive reports, for they suffer the wrath of those who call the shots. Let us look back at how an official of the Department of Education was reprimanded for giving a truthful report on the lack of classrooms and textbooks in public schools. That was the price of telling the truth which cannot be "handled," controlled and manipulated. No matter how it is said or wondered, the truth will always come out.

Many times, reports have to be "window dressed" to suit the delusions of the powerful who think their constituents are all simpletons. And that's the most insulting part of being mere subjects—to be treated like stupid by those who are possessed with a messianic complex. And so, if one wants to be qualified as a member of the "House of Lords," he must first be a master of window dressing, illusion or magic.

But it's always better to just keep working honestly to do good without so much publicity...by doing so, true efforts and accomplishments will come to be recognized with greater impact.

In other words, don't ask for recognize, work for it.

—JUAN ANTONIO S. BAUTE,
180 Escolta St., Bagulo City

LETTERS

Envious Fred Lim

ITHELANDS IS ONE OF THE MOST tourist-friendly countries in Asia, making it one of the most pro-tourist destinations for Europeans and Americans and its light among the most stable currencies in the whole of Asia.

Baguio's "gimik" spots were a favorite destination compared to Bangkok's zones of guilty bars, yet Baguio is a mutual lure of foreigners and decent Filipinos alike in search of clean fun.

But many people are complaining, but what Mayor Alfredo Lim cannot accept is that the credit for transforming that stretch of Harrison Boulevard from a mugger's dismale during Lim's previous reign as Manila mayor to Baguio's, the tourist attraction, goes to former Manila Mayor Lim deputies. This reality is too much for Lim to bear.

—TONY RIVE,
adlai1695@yahoo.com.ph

Farmers seek solutions to problems

IN JUNE 2006, THE BULACAN Farmers Action Council (BFAC) and the Regional Farmers Action Council (RFAC) of Region 3 issued an open letter denouncing the government's apparent insensitivity to the needs of millions of Filipino farmers.

In the letter, the government had just increased its support price for palay from P9 to P11 per kilogram. Although that move was well appreciated, we felt that it was not enough to uplift the lives of rice farmers. Sadly, the government support price has remained at P11 per kilogram until now.

As we stated seven years ago, the palay support price is not enough to cover our farm expenses, such as the rising cost of fertilizers and insecticides. Aside from this, there is also the glaring reality that both the farmers and the government do not have enough post-harvest facilities to properly handle our local produce and minimize losses, especially in the wake of strong typhoons or El Niño and La Niña, which is expected later this year.

Although we are grateful to the government for its support price, we would like the officials concerned to give us concrete solutions to the following problems:

1. Insufficient produce certified and registered seeds.

2. Historical swollen distribution and the ill effects of El Niño and La Niña.

3. Snails and other insects destroying our crops.

4. The wrong policy of distributing imported rice during palay harvest seasons.

5. The Department of Agriculture's non-consultation with the Provincial Farmers Action Council in policy formulations.

—SERGIO T. ROXAS,
president,
Bulacan Farmers Action Council,
rcoverzim@gmail.com

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Most number of passengers flown
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Why not British military training for RP soldiers?

THE HIGH CASUALTY RATE SUFFERED LATELY by the Armed Forces in Mindanao affected me deeply. I come from a family of soldiers: my father fought during World War II, as did uncles and in-laws. And two generals in active service are relatives.

It appalls me every time I read about soldiers unnecessarily dying in the Mindanao conflict due to defective arms and ammunition, not to mention the lack of communications facilities. Because of this, I have always wondered how really effective the training being given our soldiers is. Besides, the military's chain of command seems to be flawed, a perception given some credence by the relief of some commanders in Basilan and Zamboanga.

I suggest that the Armed Forces adopt a new system of training, particularly by the Marines who are the envy of our enemies. Effective as the Americans generally may be, it wouldn't do us harm if we tried other systems. That of the British could be a model for discipline and commandership.

All members of our Armed Forces should read the book "Above All Courage" by Max Arthur. The bestseller contains individual accounts of decorated British soldiers who fought in the Falklands War in 1982. The British troops were outnumbered three to one. They fought many times in total darkness and in below zero temperatures, while the Argentinians were fully equipped and supplied.

In many instances, badly wounded British soldiers, some of them already with severed arms and legs, insisted on staying or going back to the battlefronts or going to the aid of more badly wounded comrades by holding the "dregs" for them. And helicopter pilots flew in pitch-black darkness and during violent storms just to be able to evacuate injured (we or before) much-needed ammunition and other logistics, while Argentine jet fighters and missiles hunted them like hungry hawks. Despite the insurmountable odds, the "Mules" still managed to win the war, thus winning the admiration not only of their countrymen but also of all freedom-loving people of the world.

Arthur attributes the success of the British in Falklands to training, courage and commitment. Even while being transported to the Falklands, they never tired of training even in limited spaces aboard ships, honing their strategies and tactics on the latest intelligence reports and up-to-date maps.

No doubt, the Filipino soldier is one of the bravest, if not the bravest, in the world as proven during World War II and the Korean War. But British courage, according to the author, was attributed to their training.

—EMILIAN C. MYTOWE,
27th Pinkblue St.,
BF Homes, Quezon City

GSIS: No abuse, just following due process

IN HIS LETTER, EDWARD FELIX M. DOMAYO said that the Government Service Insurance System abused its power when it filed administrative and criminal charges against members of the Commission on Audit's Special Audit Team at SAE Inquirer, 8/15/07).

This is a very unfair statement. The GSIS never intended to intimidate anyone. Truth is, prior to the filing of these cases, the GSIS made several attempts to explain its side on the so-called SAT findings, only to find these explanations falling on dead ears. In filing cases against the SAT, the GSIS merely exercised its right to be heard, by seeking remedies available under the law. We think it is unreasonable to call one abusive when one is only following due process.

Also, it is true our system may not be a perfect system, but then again, no system is. But what we can assure the public is that the issues we read and hear about are really isolated cases. In fact, the GSIS has processed a total of P934,150,821 in benefits for our 130,575 pensioners from January to August of 2007 alone. Evidently, the complaints we get—although we are still trying them—make up barely one percent of the pension claims the GSIS handles.

—ELIAS VELOSO JR.,
vice president, Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

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'The community will decide on Ifugao terraces'

After three years of absence from local politics, Teodoro Baguilat Jr. returned as governor of Ifugao after the May elections. But the years when the 40-year-old bachelor had been away from politics were spent for his "other loves"—preserving Ifugao culture and identity through the Save the Ifugao Terraces Movement (Stime) and the media advocacy. He studied Journalism at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Baguilat believes that his being a politician (mayor of Kiangan town from 1995 to 2001, Ifugao governor from 2001 to 2004) and a "development worker" will help him serve his province well.

The official sat with the Inquirer Northern Luzon for a roundtable discussion on Aug. 14 and talked about his programs to save the rice terraces, his fight against the illegal numbers game "batang," and the kind of political culture he would espouse during his administration. Excerpts:

IFUGAO Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr.

Q: What is the status of the province when you came in? Did you do a major house cleaning?

Baguilat: Housecleaning kasi...young reps initiating, yung mga projects na na-award without the proper bidding processes, without the certificate of availability of funds, and slight oppositions.

I would not want to talk ill of the previous governor but, really, the systems had bogged down ... I kept right for ang transactions with our municipals on procurement ... kung procurement lang maybe ang kinaya nang limitadong yun ng LGUs (local government units), even down to the smallest concern, they have to be bid out.

It's a total change of the political culture. **What are your plans for the rice terraces?**

We're trying to fine-tune the master plan crafted by a Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) panel, and this is the reason they are still in the list of endangered. [Ruling] class is because of the benchmarks set by Unesco.

So we need to come up with our own benchmarks ... given time and [considering] our resources. After that, we bring the plan to the community level. Let them decide...Ano ba ang **vision nila for the rice terraces? Do you want to** preserve it or do you want to convert it?

No matter how good your plans are, if the community, if the families owning these rice terraces would not accept it [preservation proposal], it's useless. You'll expect the farmers, for what's going to stay and maintain them? Sa'n ba sa kanila ang decision.

Did I just sing along advocacy identity culture ... to preserve terraces. Ngayon, iba na. **You cannot save the unemployed.** It's the biggest problem actually. It is also [due to] economic [reason that] people are going out.

Ang advocacy ko na lang is at least [to] save ang rice terraces ng [family] that owns the terraces...would not be behind ... Provide them their basic needs and give them economic opportunities.

What can the provincial government do or provide to stop out-migration and save the terraces?

Economic opportunities ... organic agriculture, marketing of the finished rice, tourism, farm businesses ... and the basic needs—education, good health ... and historical-cultural thing [ethnicity and culture].

In the meantime, you ask also those who were set to subsidize their own kin, kasi kung nawawala pride and property ito ... an external property. And yun, economic is spreading for the modernization of ancestral properties, technically.

Bilhigan kita ng pera para i-repair mo yung sarili nung rice terraces. At least sana may tulong yung mga nagpa-migrate abroad, na maybe may kaya na nung inuuwi nanam kaya sa sarili nung rice terraces irrigation system, maintenance [of the terraces] ... kung pwede sana ang pag-lagay ng every Ifugao family ilan ba'ng rice terraces, hindi na siya magsabing mahihirapan in terms of resources.

What if they decide that they would just get out?

It has to be a family decision, and the family decision sila-become a community decision. Kung kung programa namin, the community-based land use, sila ang community to decide. So ano ba ang dami ng area nyo ngayon? ... Ano yung mga rice terraces, maintained, ha, lang. Two years from now, 20 years from now, ano ang gusto niyong mangyari? Do you still want to maintain a portion as rice terraces? If the community says, "Hell, pass naming green peace kami, vegetable garden," dun decide.

Kasi kung sasabihin mo, "Let the community decide," what if the community decides to give up the terraces? So, anda na?

Here is where we come in, where the Stime comes in, the LGU ... We have to provide the social preparation. Then if saying it-sing maganda, para sana sa inyo na yun kung gusto niyo para i-hold.

What is the out-migration pattern?

[Ilang go to] Quirino, one-third of Quirino is Ifugao. Is Nueva Vizcaya. Some work in the offices ... One time I was asking a group of students, mahirap ba pa rin sa inyo ang rice terraces? [They all agreed]. How are gaining income on the terraces? Hhh. [Laughter]

Are there groups or NGOs from other countries interested in adopting the rice terraces?

Ang gusto ko pa rin is take the advocacy to the community. Parang galing sa labas ang money, sa fresh funds. Yung barangay siet is where communities are staying there. Hindi naman siya monumento, imbakan or Tabhakulan lang sa ang residence na mga iyan. The reason endorsed, 'cause inherited, in effect...sila ang may hawak ng lands, ang rice terraces. Sila pala, just to convince them to accept the responsibility of maintaining the rice terraces.

What is your project on indigenous knowledge?

We now have a school with Ifugao State College of Agriculture and Forestry in Lamut [town], a pilot school ... Where after [ng course on—]different forms of indigenous knowledge [IK], our project is focus with local and the Unesco nomination in Ifugao.

The different forms of indigenous knowledge, like inweaving, native house construction, traditional rice cycle, the tradition of forest management [will be taught] ... We're targeting the weavers, cooks ... and engineers [inweaving engineering in traditional bridges, house knowledge/builders].

Q: For instance, a reason [night-taping] will reach, maybe, engineering students how to make taping [taping as camouflaging]. A farmer who knows about the rice cycle and cascade will mark equivalent readiness of land.

Ang outlook is to develop a core cure of IK holders who can also teach.

How would you stop "jueteng"?

It's a given that there is jueteng ... If we can stamp it and reinforce it, it shows that you're in command of the province because the only way jueteng is going to stop is if the executives and the PNP [Philippine National Police] are in one direction.

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THANK YOU MADAME PRESIDENT

In behalf of the Candaboleños, we would like to convey our heartfelt gratitude and admiration to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for the significant and enormous support of her administration to the growth and development of the Municipality of Candaba, Pampanga.

Through the support of Her excellency and the Department of Agriculture headed by Honorable Secretary Arthur Yap, Candaba has continued to maintain its fruit to riper basis Municipality.

With the continuing support of your administration, we envision Candaba with an area of 32,000 hectares as the next food basket not only for Central Luzon but also for Metro Manila aside from being the major exporter of agri-aquaculture products such as melons, corn, vegetables, tilapia and exotic fish fish.

We are also happy to inform that after two decades, melons and watermelons are back in this agricultural town. We target to produce 40 metric tons of melons and 60 metric tons of watermelons this April. Buyers from all over the country are coming to Candaba.

Candaba, since the behest of rebellion in Central Luzon, is now also a home of peace-loving people under the current peace and order situation.

We are optimistic that in the days ahead, Candaba would become one of the fastest growing municipalities in the country through the active participation and involvement of its people in local governance.

We in Candaba are double-thanking the effort of your administration for its support in bringing the local government in the implementation of programs and projects intended for sustainable development as stipulated in the Local Government Code of 1991. Through the direct transfer of funds from national to local government, projects and programs are attuned to the needs of the people and the communities as well as great number of unemployed in the town are given enough employment.

And most of all, through the full assistance of your administration in terms of augmentation and support to locally initiated agri-aqua projects and other development endeavors, aside from its environmental potentials and adaptation as a swamp and home of migratory birds.

We believe that all your resources and full support in the plight of the Candaboleños will result in the upliftment of their quality of life.

Maraming Salamat po Mahal na Pangulo.

Municipal Officials

(Sgd.) Aloysio Jurgy L. Pellejo
(Sgd.) Ma. Victoria Mercedes Soliva
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Michael G. Eugen
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Antonio G. Solana
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Oscar S. Paranggan
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Leo S. Velasco
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Agustin L. Tecson
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Ernesto D. Manaoang
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Peter B. Guevarra
(Sgd.) Cmdr. Raquel L. Fos
(Sgd.) Mr. Orde Ortofino Eby

Barangay Captains

(Sgd.) [illegible]
(Sgd.) [illegible]
(Sgd.) [illegible]

Across the NATION

Mayors want more from quarry funds

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE ORMINDA (LAMAYAN) LEAGUE (OMA) demanded bigger shares of revenues for mid-risk towns and villages and sought stronger regulatory powers over the quarry industry.

The PML made the moves two months after the administration of Gov. Eddie Ilarde, a Catholic priest, has collected an average of P1 million daily instead of the P88,500 daily in 2006 under former Gov. Mark Lapid. Collections from July 2 to Sept. 10 reached P51.5 million.

The PML, through its president, Urbano Mayor (Santa Fe), sought the changes through proposed Ordinance No. 172. It seeks an "equitable distribution of shares or fees/taxes imposed by the province of Pampanga for the extraction of quarry materials and for other purposes."

Vice Gov. Jonnifer Gonzales and members of the provincial board tackled the planned measure in its regular session on Sept. 10, The PML Blocks on Aug. 20.

In the letter, Pineda invoked Section 138 of the Local Government Code of 1991. Republic Act 7160) to subject the entire P500 fee, which represents P150 for administrative fee and P350 as sand tax for every truckload of sand, to a sharing scheme of 30-30-40 percent for the province, town and villages, respectively.

That means for each truckload, the province and town stand to get P90 each and the villages, P320, as head of the P45,000,000 sharing.

The capitol's share of P150 (30% plus P150 to administrative fee) was "wholly unfair" and "highly disproportionate," the PMC said in the draft ordinance. It said it wanted the P150 administrative fee "abolished."

Pineda said the administrative fee "in effect violates the [local government's] share in the proceeds of the tax on sand, gravel and other quarry resources."

He told the board that under Section 138, the "province may levy and collect not more than 10 percent of the fair market value in the locality per cubic meter" of quarry resources. The P500, he said, was collected since the time of former governors, now Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid.

An in-house review of documents on the quarry industry showed it was the General Resources Development Corp. of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources that started to impose that amount in 1999 when former President Joseph Estrada ordered a takeover until 2004 due to alleged irregularities in collection under Lapid. DRDC gave P80 as share.

The board, voting 7-1, rejected Gonzales's proposal to make the DRDC the collecting arm of the capitol. In her Congress, the PML asserted the authority of the provincial government to collect taxes. Tarsio Orozco, Inquirer Central Luzon

QUARRYING in Pampanga's Mabalacat area. Inset: Gov. Eddie Panlilio

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Roundup

10,000 devotees expected in Lipa

LIPA CITY—More activity breathes over the National City of Prayer pilgrimage hobby at the San Sebastian Cathedral and Mt. Carmel Church is expected to draw at least 10,000 devotees around the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed Proclamation 1302 on Aug. 15, which officially declared Sept. 13 as the National Day of Prayer for Peace and Reconciliation.

The day coincides with the 68th anniversary of the Marian apparition to Sr. Teresita Castillo of this Carmelite Convent here.

Lipa Archbishop Ramon C. Arguelles will officially launch the Pueblo Amante de Maria Mariological Society of the Philippines, the first group of theologians and Marian devotees established in the country.

Marlon Alexander Lucero, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Wharf firm exec slain in Davao

DAVAO CITY—Two motorcycle-riding men shot and killed the personnel manager of the Terminal Facilities and Services Corp. (Tefasco), a private wharf here, in Barangay Bolton, Tibungco District on Sept. 9.

Bella Tagabangin Pardal, 51, wife of Panabo City Councilor Alan Pardal, was on her way to Tefasco in Sasa, Tibungco when shot by two men.

Police could still not say the motive of the killing.

Joselito Badilla, Inquirer Mindanao

Cops arrest drug pusher

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A 28-year-old man listed as among the most notorious drug pushers in the Calabar-ion Region has been arrested in a police checkpoint in San Nicolas, Batangas Sept. 4, police said.

Batangas police director Senior Supt. David Castro identified the arrested suspect as Erick Cartagal, a resident of San Nicolas town.

Found in Cartagal's possession were a .38-cal. pistol, a .38-cal. revolver and shells.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Drug pusher gunned down

LUCENA CITY—Unidentified gunmen killed a known drug peddler in Hondes, Gracia on Sept. 1.

A police report said Elmo Beatriz, 42, resident of Barangay Lilo, Hondes was on his way home on a Honda Wave motorcycle when at least three gunmen ambushed him in Hondes Toyota Reno shot him.

The suspects sped off toward Lucena City. Beatriz suffered several fatal bullet wounds in the body that caused his immediate death.

Aside from the recovery at the crime scene of nine shells and four slugs from .45-cal. pistol, police investigators found several drug paraphernalia from Beatriz.

Police said Beatriz was previously involved in illegal drugs and had just been released from Gracia provincial jail six drug charges two months ago.

Zelda T. Rubio Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

4th most wanted man arrested

DAVAO CITY—Police arrested Catalan man's fourth most wanted criminal in Jose Abad Santos, Davao del Sur around 9:30 a.m. on Sept. 1.

Renato Pangatlan, 37, a native of Barangay Flora, had been in hiding for 17 years after he was tagged behind the death of a police officer in Nabua in 1990.

Chief Insp. Reynaldo Garma Villalo, provincial officer of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Team (CIDT) in Davao del Sur, said Pangatlan was hired as personal driver of a mayoral candidate in Laguna in 1990 when he, along with a Bicolno Pabuti, shot and killed a police officer.

Villalo did not identify the slain police officer but said Pangatlan took his pistol and sold it for P6,000.

Joselito Badilla, Inquirer Mindanao

'Ukay-ukay' seized in Davao

DAVAO CITY—At least four container-vans of used clothes, commonly known as "ukay-ukay," were confiscated by authorities at the Sasa Wharf here on Sept. 7.

Bureau of Customs Antonio Villar, head of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG), who led the raid, said the contraband came from Malaysia and was worth at least P2 million.

Villar's group was joined by the Bureau of Customs in seizing the contraband, which consisted of shoes, bags and hangers.

The smuggled goods, he said, were consigned to JDA Marketing here.

Villar said charges were now being prepared against the importers.

Orlando Olivo, Inquirer Mindanao

Anti-robbery handbook out

DAGUPAN CITY—After studying the activities of the Acelotone Gang, which robs banks and pawnshops, the Ilocos regional police have come up with a handbook on how to counteract the criminal activities.

The 21-page handbook, prepared by the Regional Anti-Bank Robbery Special Operations Task Force and the Regional Intelligence Division in Camp Fernando in San Fernando City, was launched on Sept. 6 by Bank Crime Prevention Week.

Senior Supt. Ned Tabilo, the handbook's author, said the handbook contains tips on countering the modus operandi of various syndicates involved in bank and pawnshop robberies, especially the Acelotone Gang.

The gang usually bores holes on the roofs of buildings using acetylene torches. Tabilo said the handbook will serve as guide for the local police, owners and managers of banks and pawnshops and other establishments.

Yolanda Zotelo-Fuerte, Inquirer Northern Luzon

US role as Mindanao peacekeeper sought

COTABATO CITY—THE UNITED STATES could play a vital role in the peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) by turning its forces in Mindanao into peacekeepers, similar to the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team (IMT), a Singapore-based Maguindanao-born security consultant-analyst said.

In his report posted Sept. 5 on the website (http://www.nia.edu.sg) of the Rajaratnam Schoolof International Studies in Singapore, a research facility on security in Asia, Tabarialha Hong Hooguanon said therefore troops could become effective as peacekeepers instead of their current role with the Philippine military.

US forces in Mindanao have been training their Filipino counterparts on antiterror and are largely deployed in Sulu and Jolo.

Hooguanon, a native of Maguindanao, said the US role could complement the efforts of Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which by "growing public uncertainty," has allegedly lost some credibility in peace mediation.

"Fraud of this growing uncertainty was the late (MILF) chairman Hashim Salamat's repeated letters in 2006 to President Bush, indicating the willingness of the MILF to welcome OIC mediation," he said.

In supporting his analysis that the OIC has become a not-effective peace mediator, Amparsan cited the case of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Despite the signing of the 1996 peace agreement between the government and the MNLF, Amparsan said the worst hostilities in Sulu and Basilan, resulting some MNLF combatants, were provoked by the OIC's effort has failed.

The problem, he said, was the inability of the OIC to play its role effectively.

He said the OIC has repeatedly postponed talks aimed at ironing out kinks in the 1996 peace agreement, which resulted in frustration among former rebels.

"This development not only threatens to undermine the 11-year-old peace treaty between government and MNLF but also compromises the stable gains of counterterrorism efforts that are supported by United States in the Southern Philippines," he said.

Amparsan said the OIC's failure is not without its merits in the 1996 peace agreement considering taken advantaged of by Moro militants affiliated with the Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaeda. Aseffya Maston, Inquirer Mindanao

TROOPERS on the deployment in Basilan.

East Visayas farmers plant ahead of sked

By Nicanor S. Lubre
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—FARMERS in at least three provinces in Eastern Visayas have started planting rice for a "third cropping" by December, the Department of Agriculture regional office has been reported.

Leo Cañeda, regional DA executive director, disclosed that farmers from Leyte, Biliran and Samar have been planning "early maximizing this variety for the quick turnaround (QTA) program so they would be able to harvest before the end of the year."

Cañeda said the region has targeted for the QTA program some 2,000 hectares of the land, which could produce around 15,000 to 12,000 metric tons of palay.

The second long dry spell, particularly in Leyte, has resulted in the shortfall of rice production in the agriculture department had to look to Visayas and Mindanao to offset the estimated fifty rice(P) softwise effect.

Cañeda has likened the QTA to "a third cropping season," which is not the general practice in the region.

Normally, the region has two cropping seasons—the dry season and the wet season from May to October and from November to April.

"Farmers can plant until Sept. 15 and be assured of a harvest before the end of the year," Cañeda said.

He said the DA might also tap Gerchorb Leyte to ensure that the region attained its QTA goal.

He said prospects are "very bright" that the region would overshoot its rice production target of 892,000 metric tons this year. The Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, in a report, projected that the region might produce 941,000 tonsthis year.

Mayor asks DoF to probe town's treasurer on funds

DUMAGUETE, NEGROS ORIENTAL—MAYOR Ferdinand Bahinting of this town asked the Department of Finance to investigate the unexplained transactions and issues of fund mismanagement and misdistribution.

In a complaint affidavit submitted to the DoF, Bahinting said municipal treasurer Linda Canceran transferred funds from one of the seven accounts at the Land Bank of the Philippines, just before the Commission on Audit audited the account, "to give the account a semblance of deposits being made on them."

He also claimed that Canceran was not regularly depositing local revenues collected by the town.

"The minimal and unexplainable scarce deposits in the bank give rise to the conclusion that the loan proceeds made for personal purposes," Bahinting said.

But Canceran, in a telephone interview, called Bahinting's complaint as "political harassment" and said she welcomed the investigation by the DoF because "all I need is for audited and time process of law."

She said she was being harassed by Bahinting because she refused to allow payment for his inaugural party. "I advised him that such expenses should be personal, but he said I should just wait for commission from him," she said.

Bahinting also said Canceran allowed excessive disbursements from the funds of the office of the municipal accounting and auditing section, and that when he assumed office on June 30, the money for the third and fourth quarters had been spent. Rolando Inquirer Post Inc., Inquirer Northern Luzon

CHEd tells review centers to abide by rules

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Cordillera has urged the region's review centers to comply with its new guidelines to continue their operations beyond November this year.

Dr. Perlidor Bernal, acting CHEd regional director, said the reminder is especially for existing review centers in light of the breakup that marred the June 2006 nursing licensure examinations.

The controversy, which became the subject of a Senate inquiry, dragged the name of a review center in Baguio City.

"The number of students who take up nursing is increasing and so is the number of review centers," Bernal said.

He said the region has 20 review centers and 21 of them are for nursing.

President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 566 on Sept. 8, 2006 directing the CHEd to come up with regulations to govern the operation of review centers and other similar centers.

Under the CHED's implementing rules and regulations, all review centers are required to establish a formal link with accredited higher institutions or to form their own consortia before they could operate.

The rules gave review centers a grace period of one year to complete their tie up or their concession into consortia.

The grace period would end this November and the CHED expects all review centers to have complied, Bernal said.

"The requirements were issued to ensure the quality of reviews we can tendered and to avoid inconsistent and unethical practices," he said.

CHEd records showed that there were 88,115 college students enrolled in the region's 26 pre-law and review colleges and universities for school year 2006-2007.

Out of the number of enrollees, 12,032 graduated in the same school year.

For the same period, the region had 28,807 nursing graduates who took nurse licensure board in the region's 21 nursing schools. Adding the 3,585 graduates who graduated.

The schools with the most nursing graduates are found in Baguio City—Saint Louis University (1,369) and Baguio Central University (1,349).

He said the tie-up required of review centers must be with "recognized, respected and accredited higher institution of learning" in order to ensure the quality of reviewees.

The consortia, he said, would give the review centers a more credible "juridical personality" and a more aggressive delivery of review services. Ordinate Caroline, Inquirer Northern Luzon

NEW nurses take their professional oaths.

2 gov't agencies headed for collision over road plan

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—TWO GOVERNment offices in the Cordillera may yet collide after one of them declared as geologically hazardous a road section in Kapangan even as the other agency believed was safe to pour 6,000 bulbins for repair.

Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) experts said a 4-km portion of the diversion road in Barangay Ballayangan lies along a fault line and is found in unstable ground.

The findings raised questions among local authorities in Ifugao's capital town as to why the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) insisted to construct portions of the road.

Board Member Ann Waamis Jr. said the MGB's recommendation that discouraged the rebuilding of the road's concrete directly contradicted the DPWH's statement that the road's condition presented infrastructure woes.

The road became controversial when Board Member Bogchi Lean, Kapangan's former mayor, questioned the DPWH's decision to use P20 million of its funds to rehabilitate the area.

Lean said the P20 million was DPWH's counterpart of the P80 million President Macapagal-Arroyo pledged for the repair of the steep Kapangan-Ifugao national road.

Mr. Mervin Gaddi, the province after the rest the road's condition when she traveled by land from Baguio City to the Kapangan-town ballot March 10 this year to assess the area's flood.

She ordered the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to contribute P20 million each to complete the P80 million road project for the road.

Lean said Mr. Arroyo did not reach the Nalbungan road section during her visit and thus, the P20 million DPWH fund must be used to repair the road within the 35-km area's that the President had traversed.

But Oswaldo Gandiela, Ifugao DPWH second district engineer, said the P80 million Mr. arroyo committed covered the entire national that included the Nalbungan section.

Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Lacson: GMA driving force behind $329-M broadband deal

By DJC. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. PANFILO LACSON YESTERDAY called President Macapagal-Arroyo the driving force behind the controversial $329-million national broadband deal with ZTE Corp. of China to be carried out with a "reconstituted" copy of the supply contract.

Lacson said the copy of the contract was deliberately hidden by government officials and was not stolen as reported by the media.

In a privilege speech, Lacson said that despite the objections of Ms. Arroyo's economic advisers to spending for another broadband network when there were already those in operation—one by PLDT, Telstra/Pilipino Telephone and the other by Bayantel—"the project was railroaded" using contrived reasoning."

"The answer was in effect—because the President's vision of a cyber corridor, her Cabinet must operationalize, because there was a cyber corridor grand vision, we had to have a National Broadband Network," Lacson said.

He said Ms. Arroyo pronounced her NBN vision in her 2006 State of the Nation Address.

Ms. Arroyo had drawn in a broad meeting of the National Economic and Development Authority in November last year the conditions for the project:

- It should be undertaken under a build-operate-and-transfer scheme using private funding.
- It should have no government subsidy.
- It should be implemented as a "pay for use" facility.
- It should lend to substantial savings for the government.

'Pork barrel'

Lacson said the project said its terms, specifically the funding in which P35 billion of the projected P70.6 billion would come from foreign loans, were changed in the Investment Coordination Committee meeting with the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) and Telecommunications Office in March this year.

The project met with skepticism from economic officials and US Ambassador Kristie Kenney, who described it as a "pure basis" with the NBN project over the next three weeks before the contract was signed by eliminating the two other proponents—Amsterdam Holdings Inc. and Innocom Inc. of the Estrada family.

Lacson took note of the fact that Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri endorsed the NBN project to the Ortas Export-Import Bank on April 20 or less than three weeks after he questioned its viability.

"Instead big strange must have happened between March 26 and April 20. Did the DOTC adequately explain to my Secretary Neri's cogent and reasonable apprehensions? Or did the Exec. who were boasted to his ZTE friends—that he would be the most powerful official of the Philippines come the elections of 2007, convinced Secretary Neri? How, I ask?" Lacson asked.

The senator said that while it was karma of Neri to reject a proposed P2.08-billion kickback, "it was idiotic of him to have signed the approval of the NBN contract."

Purposely hidden

Lacson presented to the Senate a "muted for word" copy of the 59-page contract that Commission on Elections Secretary Lourdes Monktons and ZTE vice president Yu Yong and witnessed by Assistant Secretary Lorenzo Reinieres III Fabia Lacson described as the project's white fold and ZTE chair Hong Wenjun in front of a "beaming" Mr. Arroyo in Hainan, China, on April 15.

"What did Romulo think he would find with the clunk-and-dagger nuts of a theft in the hotel room of a ZTE trade executive in Hainan? I would say they were purposely hidden because as soon as the President and Secretary Monktons came back to this country, the truth that is the NBN-ZTE mega-deal project is smell all over," Lacson said.

He also questioned how the Department of Justice could declare on July 26 the legality of the NBN contract that it claimed did not exist.

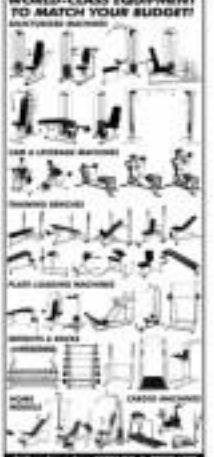
"For all intents and purposes, the signatory to this contract has declared that he has the full power and authority to obligate the Republic. The purported act was that the President lends more than just symbolic importance to it," Lacson said.

'Like a thief in the night'

Lacson also presented a press statement from Mr. Arroyo saying dissatisfaction the President as having "come like a thief in the night" in her side trip from the Asian economic forum in China.

In the contract, Lacson said the project would cost $329.461 million, with $199.351 million going to equipment, $114.605 million for engineering services, $14.871 million for managed services, and $1.368 million for training services.

"ZTE is supposed to complete supply and installation, testing and commissioning within 36 months from the effective date of the contract. That would be after 2010 when a new government could have presumably taken over. Whether it works as well as it should, given that the contractor itself will plan, design, test and implement, that's the problem of the next government," he said.



Business groups welcome SC decision

By Ronnel W. Domingo and Nico T. Clubrunka

THE COUNTRY'S LEADING BUSINESS groups welcomed the Supreme Court decision, but some said it was not enough.

As expected, ZTE Corp. won "half" over the "temporary refusal" while its rival for the project, Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), the withheld issued an order temporarily prohibiting government officials from enforcing the deal with China's ZTE Corp.

AHI, which offered an unsolicited bid for the project, said Supreme also sought to compel government officials to give them a copy of the contract and other related documents for scrutiny.

"Now, therefore, effective immediately and continuing until further orders from this Court, you, respondents ... and any and all persons acting on their behalf are hereby enjoined from pursuing, entering into negotiations, disbursing funds, and implementing the ZTE-DOTC broadband deal and Project" as prayed for," the high court said in an en banc resolution.

Congressional leaders have called for the renegotiation of the contested NBN contract, the subject of an investigation by committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The NBN project is intended to connect government offices nationwide through landline, cellular and Internet services. It would be funded through a loan from China.

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said the respondents in the case petitions were given 15 days upon notice to file their comments.

The respondents include the National Economic and Development Authority and its former chief Romulo Neri; the Department of Transportation and Communications and Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Commission on Information and Communications Technology and Chair Ramon Salazar; ZTE Corp.; Innocom Inc.; the National Telecommunications Commission; bids and awards for information and communications technology committee, and the technical working group for ICT.

The high court, in a resolution released yesterday, also took note of the entry of appearance of the Angara Abello Concepcion Regala and Cruz law office as ZTE Corp. counsel and granted its request to be given copies of pleadings, appearances and motions in relation to the case.

The $329-million contract was signed by Mendoza and ZTE vice president Yu Yong on April 21 in Boao, China, in connection with the visit by President Macapagal-Arroyo. Reports have it the Philippine copy of the contract was stolen in a hotel in China. It has since been reconstituted.

the development of the telecommunications sector.

Lim said the SEC believed that the contract should not push through.

He said he said that the NBN project would cause overcapacity because there were two existing telecommunications backbones and it would lead to the imposition of more taxes.

"We are saddened that the NBN project, which the Philippine people cannot has deemed necessary and urgent, has been placed on hold," ZTE said in a statement.

"Even as we respect the order of the Supreme Court, we hope that during this period, concerned parties will take an objective and dispassionate look at the merits of the project, our proposal, and the conduct of the award, all of these have been the subject of numerous events, unwarranted and unfair allegations," the Chinese firm said.

Senate Speaker Manuel Villar Jr. expressed confidence that this TRO was a temporary setback.

"We are confident that the general public will see that ZTE has the best proposal and track record to implement the project," it said.

Villar's rival for the NBN contract, AHI was elated.

"It say that we are relieved is an understatement," said Marinella D'Antonio. She is a legal counsel for AHI, which was founded by Jose "Jerry" de Venecia III, son of House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

"While it is temporary at least it stops government from proceeding until we clarify what is going on," D'Antonio said.

For his part, Donald G. Dee, chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), said PCCI supported the Supreme Court's move.

"Now that Amsterdam's

SC votes 8-7 to stop NBN deal

Turn to page A6

funeral, said a lawyer who asked not to be named.

Sulking on the petitions of Bello Vice Gov. Robert Jaquino and Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), the tribunal issued an order temporarily prohibiting government officials from enforcing the deal with China's ZTE Corp.

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The respondents include the National Economic and Development Authority and its former chief Romulo Neri; the Department of Transportation and Communications and Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Commission on Information and Communications Technology and Chair Ramon Salazar; ZTE Corp.; Innocom Inc.; the National Telecommunications Commission; bids and awards for information and communications technology committee, and the technical working group for ICT.

The high court, in a resolution released yesterday, also took note of the entry of appearance of the Angara Abello Concepcion Regala and Cruz law office as ZTE Corp. counsel and granted its request to be given copies of pleadings, appearances and motions in relation to the case.

The $329-million contract was signed by Mendoza and ZTE vice president Yu Yong on April 21 in Boao, China, in connection with the visit by President Macapagal-Arroyo. Reports have it the Philippine copy of the contract was stolen in a hotel in China. It has since been reconstituted.

HOW THEY VOTED

A MAJORITY SAID THOSE WHO VOTED TO issue the TRO were Chief Justice Reynato Puno, Associate Justices Leonardo Quisumbing, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, Antonio Carpio, Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, Conchita Carpio-Morales and Adolfo Azcuna.

The seven justices who voted against the TRO were Renato Corona, Dante Tinga, Minita Chico-Nazario, Cancio Garcia, Presbitero Velasco, Antonio Eduardo Nachura and Ruben Reyes.

The NBN deal has been in the news over the past two weeks because of allegations of bribery and overpricing. Nueva Ecija Rep. Carlos Padilla accused Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. of brokering the deal and of receiving several favors from ZTE.

Abalos subsequently denied the allegations, saying Dr. Venecia's statements were part of an attempt to mislead the public about Mr. Venecia's role in the NBN project.

ZTE has also denied bribing government officials to bag the contract.

Seen by only select few

Earlier, two economics professors at the University of the Philippines said the NBN deal was not necessary because of existing broadband infrastructure owned by the country's telcos.

In their petition filed the other day, Alih and its president Nathaniel Imot said the government was throwing the deal on the people despite the numerous questions about it, and despite the contract being seen by only a select few government officials.

"Very plainly, the parties, herein respondents included, are railroading the NBN-ZTE transaction, rumoring it deserves every expeditious threat.

"The government is proceeding with this project with reckless abandon, impervious to the very valid concerns, questions, and misgivings raised and ventilated before various fora during the past several months. Obviously, the parties interested in this transaction want the deal sealed, so to speak, even before anybody can raise a doubting hood."

'Rigged election process'

The petitioners also said that if the deal continued, Filipinos would be in debt for something that was not been studied well and in which they had not agreed.

Naphica said the high court should nullify the NBN contract with ZTE because it was executed in the aftermath "rigged election proceedings," and violated the procurement law and the build-operate-transfer law that require public bidding, and the Telecommunications Act that requires the government to privatize telecommunications facilities.

"The NBN project, under the contract in question, should be cancelled and voided for preferring public infrastructure over self-reliant and well-functioning private sector initiatives," he said.

The Philippine Society of Climacteric Medicine, Inc.
15th Annual Convention
September 13 – 14, 2007
Hotel Intercontinental Manila, Makati City
Theme: "Future Directions in the Management of menopause"

Board of Directors Y2007

Organizing Committee Y2007

The Philippine Society of Climacteric Medicine, Inc. was organized on November 28, 1992 at the Philippine Plaza Hotel by a group of Obstetrician- Gynecologists and internists with special interest and expertise in the care of adult women. From its inception, the PSCM was active in indigenous and international activities so that it became affiliated with the Asia Pacific Menopause Federation in 1994. Likewise, it became a member of the International Menopause Society.

Currently there are 134 members of the society with delegates from the disciplines of cardiology, orthopedic surgery, psychiatry, radiology, nutrition, rheumatology and dermatology with their respective representations in the Board of Directors.

The PSCM 15th Annual Convention is open to all physicians. For inquiries, you may call our secretariat, Ms. Marianne Flores at 433-9778.

Peso tumbles to 47:$1 level amid political uncertainties

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO TUMBLED BACK yesterday to the 47-$1 level ahead of the Sandiganbayan's much-awaited verdict in Joseph Estrada's landmark plunder case.

The local currency closed at the day's low of 47.12 to the US dollar, or 42 centavos weaker than Monday's finished 46.70 on the Philippine Dealing System. Volume reached at the spot foreign exchange market also jumped to $866 million from $405 million.

On top of domestic political uncertainties, the regional currency market has been weak the last few days because of concerns that the problems in the US housing sector would cause a sharp economic slowdown and drag down the rest of the world's surplus.

Currency traders said that whether the verdict was convictive or acquittal, uncertainties on the aftermath were carrying fresh political risks that were aggravating market pressures related to a worsening credit crunch in the United States, the Philippines' biggest trading partner.

The issuance of a mandamus (deed) bank said the markets had been jittery over the verdict. Thus, he said, his bank had scaled down its exposure to peso assets and merely "squared" or evened off trading positions in the peso dollar market daily in the last few days while waiting for the dust to settle in the political arena.

Spooked either way

Bankers said that either way, the verdict would spook the markets because fintech was still enjoying strong support among the investors.

A foreign banker spelled it out: A conviction might result in violent mass actions, and an acquittal would raise doubts on the Philippines' capability to uphold the rule of law.

But many appeared to have priced in a conviction, with the next pressing game revolving on whether Malacañang would extend a presidential pardon.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. senior vice president Mamerto Apuya said knee-jerk reactions were weighing down the peso by 50-75 centavos.

"So we're looking at the 47.20-47.30 level," Apuya said.

Security Bank Corp. (SBC) chief economist Asuncion Raymundo said the situation was being affected "a little bit" by the Estrada verdict, "but it's not entirely all about Erap."

Raymundo said that for him, global concerns over the health of the US economy was what constituted the bigger drag on the peso.

PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY GROUP members patrol the Pasig River near the Palace (at left). Other members of the SWAT team wear (at right) an assignment at the Sandiganbayan on Estrada's judgment day.

THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: Do not enter the Palace gates. Latinos are blasting the government's security preparations for making the country look like a garrison state.

SHOW OF FORCE: This is neither Nadar nor Solo. It's Camp Aguinaldo on the eve of Verdict Day. Decentralizers, forgive us.

INSPECTION OF THE TROOPS of the National Capital Region Command is done by no less than the AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon at Camp Aguinaldo on Tuesday.

All roads to Palace sealed: 8,000 troops in full battle gear stand by

Viewpage A1

making that will come?" he said.

"This unnecessary deployment of so many troops is a disturbing reminder that this administration will go to great lengths of brutal and ruthless suppression of peaceful assembly and the repression of other rights to remain peace," said the son of the ousted President.

The senator said his father does not wish to reclaim the presidency if he is acquitted, saying "President Estrada wishes to close his career and to retire gradually to private life."

Red alert

The Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police are maintaining a red alert—the highest state of readiness—that has been in force since the President left on Thursday to attend the Asia-Pacific summit in Sydney over the weekend.

"We are preparing for any eventuality because there might be groups that might create disturbances or cannot accept whatever decision of the Sandiganbayan as correct that has tried the case since 2004 (might proceed to)," said Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., AFP chief of staff.

Full combat gear

Dressed in combat gear, Esperon inspected 5,400 of the 8,000 soldiers from the National Capital Regional Command (NCRC) at the grandstand of the AFP general headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo and ordered them to "uphold and enforce" the Sandiganbayan decision.

The NCRC contingent will augment, if needed, a 6,000-strong PNP force that will be deployed by Metro Manila to more contingencies.

Among the units the AFP included in the backup force were the 12th Mechanized Infantry Company from Tarlac, the 21st Division Recon Company from Quezon, and the 205th Tactical Helicopter Squadron which covers the entire Luzon.

Yesterday's show of force included a display of 18 armored personnel carriers, a Huey UH-1H helicopter, a recovery vehicle, and R/O and explosives and ordnances teams.

Music by AFP ladies club

The show status would likely remain until Saturday, Esperon said.

The NCRC contingent is reported to gather at the AFP grandstand tonight, where the AFP Ladies' Club will sponsor bands that will entertain the troops—a gesture to keep morale high.

Jailed plotters

Esperon said it was likely that the soldiers would be deployed in the streets to quiet the PNP in the event of "large-scale or widespread violent activities."

"We are ready for that kind of situation," he said. He also stressed that reports about rallies being used as a prelude to destabilization attempts remained "unconfirmed and unverified."

"As I look at it, we do not see any elements from the Armed Forces that would be participating in any kind of destabilization. Yet that's one any group that would initiate such unconstitutional activities," he said.

Asked if the Marine officials detained for an alleged coup attempt last year still wield influence among their men, Esperon replied that whatever influence they have would only be because of "personal relationships."

Police confined to posts

"Our soldiers listen to their commanders," he stressed.

PNP Deputy Director General Aeriden Cinco said reporters that a full alert means all members of the 120,000-strong PNP would have to stay at their posts at all times.

The PNP has said it was deploying 8,000 policemen for its security preparations for the verdict. Around 138 policemen will serve as Estrada's "close-in" security. Of this number, around 40 policemen will ride with Estrada on his convoy from his "home" to the house where he is detained to the Sandiganbayan.

Supt. Rodel Sermonia, NCRC spokesperson, said security personnel would be deployed at the St. Peter's Church in Batasan near the Sandiganbayan in Quezon City, the Sandiganbayan Gardens in San Juan, Ayala Avenue in Makati and the Senate grounds.

"We are ready. We will implement mega-maximum tolerance in dealing with (rallies)," Sermonia said.

Brig. Gen. Romeo Peviana, chief of the Presidential Security Group, said he would not allow a repetition of the January 13, when Estrada supporters managed to enter Manila rallying, leaving four people dead and 148 others wounded.

"We're more prepared this time," he said. "We also have some strategy to do it, so that that will not happen again."

Garrison state

Renato Reyes, secretary general of the leftist Bayan Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), said an "immense" display of administration might by top Minister Manila "into a garrison state." With reports from Jeannette I. Andrade and Kristine L. Alave

POLITICAL FATIGUE

Some no longer care if Erap is found guilty or not

By Nestor Burgos, Agence-France Presse Staff

SOME FILIPINOS INTERVIEWED in survey of politics they no longer care if Joseph Estrada is found guilty or not in his plunder trial. They just want to get on with their lives.

Others say that trial as a waste, as lawyer leaders that without happened to Estrada could also happen to them.

A few worry the verdict could spark another people power revolt.

Random interviews around the country showed that 10 Filipinos are mostly fed up with what they see as unending court delays.

Some believe Estrada is guilty others innocent. Here are their thoughts, expressed anonymously to Filipino.

—Zenaida Rendon, 52, mother of five, Binalbagan (Negros Occidental): "But I don't blame him if he's innocent because whatever is the decision, it won't add to the marriage of my husband. Nothing will change. He will still be poor."

—Roman Vargas Jr., 45, self-employed, Virac, Catanduanes: "Super-rich is longest in prison, [Ferdinand] Marcos [Jr.] is in Malacañan who should be convicted, not Erap."

—Rolly E. Aganong, 33, security guard, Bacolod: (Not Guilty): "He was framed by political enemies."

—Teresita Jon Cruz Rubio, 56, housewife, Pasig: "He told himself if our leaders without works ... In our homes, no big fish has been convicted, which means the law is only for the marginalized."

—Antonio Lim, former councilor, Gerona City: "If he is declared guilty, I suggest he be shot by firing squad to serve as an example to others. But if the verdict is not guilty, the government must pay for damages and the humiliation heaped on the families of years in detention. He should be allowed to resume his post."

—Nita Cifredon, 69, pensioner, Cebu City: (Not Guilty): "Mahalaalawit yun. Dito'lit ninapa through."

The rich and powerful

—Jerry Garcia, 40, accountant, Quezon City: (Not Guilty): "The charges were merely political and I am certain that the decision had been worked."

—Tommy Heladio, 50, professional photographer, Iligan: (Guilty): "I'd want a guilty verdict ... If a guilty verdict would come out, the face of the judiciary would be preserved. In the Philippines, a lot of people think if you're rich and powerful, you can buy justice."

—Fr. Reynaldo Suluj, 51, parish priest, Bacod, Lagnan: "To say is just a cliché. He was only singled out. What about Ramos, the first Southerner and others?"

—Helen Ayon, 33, student, Leyte: Neutral: Extremely Tacloban: (Not Guilty): He will not believe the trust of the Filipino people, particularly the masses. He must to know if there is still justice in the country."

Fear of Edsa 3

—Romeo Gabejan, 58, worker, Malolos, Bulacan: (Guilty): "Erap's case will serve as a warning to others in government. The case has dragged on and it should finally be resolved."

—Kevin Cenzontinco, 23, Ateneo student, San Juan: (Not Guilty): "Let he will be acquitted). "I am more convinced with what will happen next. I don't want a repeat of Edsa 2 ... I hope supporters of either camp would not resort to violence."

—Lt. Angel Benavidez, Marshall, Kennedy City: "We hope and pray that the verdict will be based on law and the facts of the case ... We want to see the talk-more-do-more of this case ... as the healing process can start."

—Gary Lenteric, 29, fish vendor, Malvar: "I really don't care anymore. It won't affect me at all. Nothing will happen after that, anyway. And I'm not interested [in] him."

'Others worse than Erap'

—Marvie Gonzaa Feldspun, 31, jobless college graduate, Mati, Davao Oriental: "I am beginning to feel sympathy for the man because I realized he was not alone in plundering the country but he's being singled out. There are lots of so-called public servants even much worse than him. But it will definitely send a strong message to corrupt officials in the government."

—Manfred Bautchara, 35, domestic helper, Dipolog, Zamboanga: "Any guilty to nothing long ago here! (I hope he gets a light sentence)."

—Luciano "Leo" Salcon, Manila executive trainee (not-Guilty, perhaps): "Justice should be upheld in all circumstances for their only those without money should suffer ... When did this happened, everyone found it difficult to make it in politics, as if people were saying: 'They are all like that'."

Price of corruption

—Meryl Aguilar, 29, insurance and evaluation officer, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, Caloocan: "If he's guilty, that would serve as a strong warning to all our leaders that it is time to put an end to our justice system to ensure the price for graft and corruption."

—Cherry M., assistant supervisor, work agency, Lahan, Basilan: (Not Guilty): "Even might be people power. That would cause trials. I am concerned about the verdict because that would have an effect on the economy. When Erap stopped ebonia, the price went up."

—Bing Bagalawis, 46, education specialist, Children's Laboratory, Quezon City: (Guilty): "I don't think he knows that what he did was 'plunder' unlike others who haven't said for that matter worse] not to be caught."

Voices of politics

—Eva Lim, 33, housewife, Caloocan: "Wala yung donations, para saan along pulubi-bati, tutulo't tutulo [for] ang pera? Kung guilty [sa] [ang] ito, it's up to them to do what they want with their lives]."

—Glenn Bunin, 28, security guard, Tagbilaran: (Not Guilty): "He is just a victim of too much politics ..."

—Porpirio Pamado, 52, security guard, Quezon City: (Not Guilty): "If he is to vote a former President go to prison. I am sure there are other politicians who have done worse things than him."

—Reymundo Valeste-Morales, fisherman, Davao Oriental: "If he is convicted, will that improve our living conditions? This is just a power play of the rich and powerful. It will never benefit us."

—Meynard Abog, 31, carpenter, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro: "Malalet si Erap, guilty lang si GMA or former [Erap is kind, GMA just hates kind."

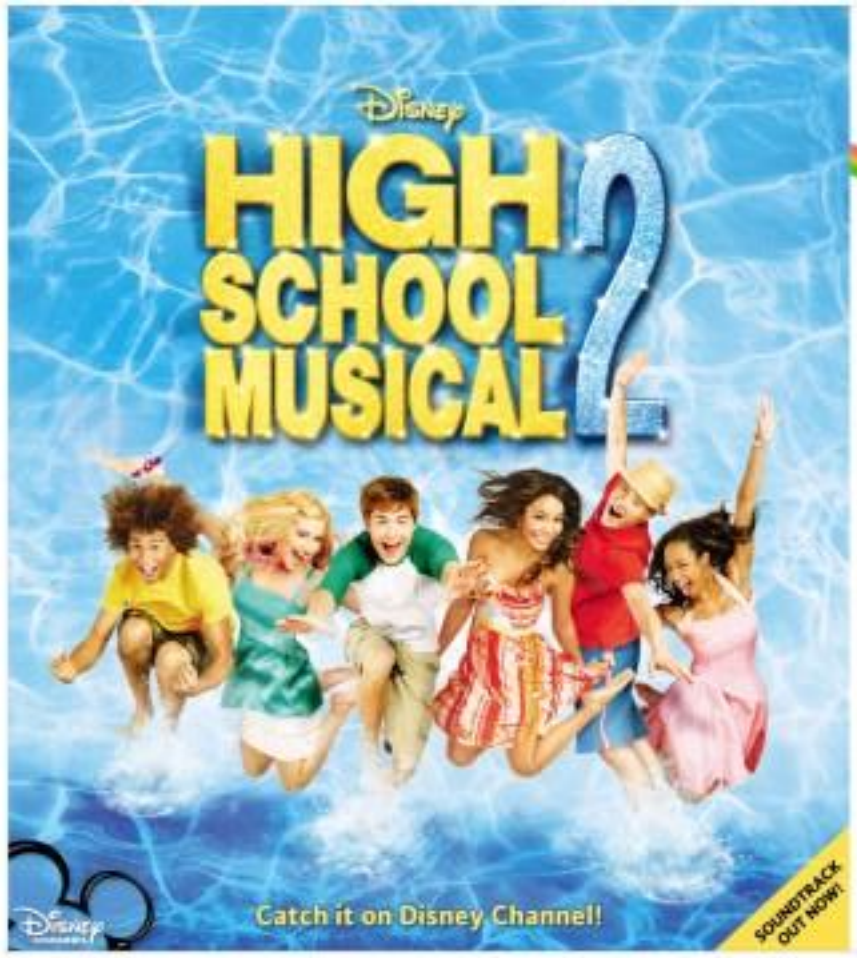
Good for jurisprudence

—Arnel Demodelle, 32, OFW from Dubai, Sidayuman: "Guilty or not guilty, I don't think my situation is going to be affected."

—Jerry Jurisag, law professor, University of the East, Manila: "(This case) will enrich our jurisprudence. It's the first time that a President is willing to open jail for his beliefs."

—Jenny Dudevoza, 44, housewife, Pasig: "He should be punished if found guilty."

With reports from Tina Santos, DJ Yap, Allison Lopez, Jaime H. Ascalon, Kristine Abora, Jeannette Andrade, Nancy Carvajal, Kenneth M. del Rosario, Carmela Reyes and Neville Gwyn, Inquirer Correspondents, Cebu, Mindanao, Iloilo, Inquirer Northern Luzon, Aurora Quezon, Romulo Dona, Episcopio Aguilar, Jayson Carroll, Nina Centurion Calleja, Mindanao Desks, Inquirer Southern Tagalog, Elmer Kristen Bongay and Gilbert Macla



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Editor Boots G. Dipasupil

DID YOU KNOW

ACCORDING to the Waste Management Office of Manila, the city has the highest garbage collection efficiency rate—99 percent—in Metro Manila. Manila reportedly collects about 5,000 cubic meters of trash in a day.
Cyril C. Bonalaric, Inquirer Research

23 QC schools suspend classes today

Inconvenience, security problems tied up to reading of Erap verdict cited

By Kenneth M. dela Rosa Jr. and Jeannette I. Andrade

QUEZON CITY OFFICIALS YESTERDAY announced the suspension of classes today in 23 public elementary and secondary schools near the Commonwealth area due to the "inconvenience and security problems" that could arise following the promulgation of the Sandiganbayan decision in former President Joseph Estrada's plunder case.

According to the Quezon City division of schools, there will be no classes today in the following elementary schools: Doña Josefa, Salomon Hills, San Diego, Commonwealth, Culiat, New Era, Pasong Tamo, Holy Spirit, Payatas A, Payatas B, Payatas-B Annex, Payatas-C, Lupang Pangako, Bagong Silangan, Culiat, New Era, and Manuel L. Quezon.

Classes were also suspended in the following high schools: Commonwealth, Commonwealth Holy Spirit, Batasan Hills National, Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma, Bagong Silangan, Culiat, New Era, and Pasong Tamo.

The Quezon City government, on the other hand, recommended the cancellations of classes in 68 private schools in the area, although Mayor Feliciano Belmonte said that the decision would be left to school officials.

At press time, only several private schools have announced the suspension of classes today.

Those near the Ateneo Preparatory School, the Our Lady of Mercy School of Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University, Miriam College, FEU-Roosevelt, and Ateneo Law School of Quezon City, Ateneo and Miriam officials, however, said that there would be classes in the colleges and post-graduate levels.

Ateneo Preparatory and the Our Lady of Mercy are near the site where protesters are expected to gather.

Only one group, however, the Otso Otsos Movement, has so far applied for a permit rally which was approved by the city's Department of Public Order and Safety.

The group's request to stage a protest in front of the Sandiganbayan was denied after DPOS chief Manuel Sebastia said this violated a Supreme Court ruling, which prohibits rallies within a radius of 200 m from any shall of justice, including the Sandiganbayan.

Sebastia said the group would be restricted to the area near St. Peters Church where more Estrada supporters are expected to gather. Organizers have said they would gather some 5,000 pm.Erap demonstrations for the promulgation of the Sandiganbayan decision today.

The DPOS said it was coordinating with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Quezon City Police District, and the Traffic Enforcement Group to maintain peace and order among rallists and outside the Sandiganbayan.

QCPD director, Senior Supt. Magnaguil Gamboa, said he and his men were "all set and prepared for any eventuality."

Some 300 city traffic enforcers will be deployed in the vicinity of the courthouse as early as 5 a.m.

QCPD spokesperson, Supt. Augustus Cabalza, said the southbound lane of Commonwealth Avenue (Diliman to Fairview) will be closed to traffic starting at 6 a.m., from the first turnaround in front of the Commission on Audit building.

Cabalza added that the southbound lane would be opened to two-way traffic. Northbound vehicles can use the U-turn slot near the New Era overpass and to go to the southbound lane.

The northbound lane will only be opened as soon as the situation in the area normalizes, the police official said, adding that the ordinary dispersal of protesters.

₱3 million lost in Pasig City building fire

By Kristine L. Alave

PROPERTY WORTH ABOUT ₱3 million was damaged when a fire broke out on the 10th floor of the Arcovia 2000 building at the Ortigas business district in Pasig City Monday night.

Hundreds of employees fled from the building when the fire was reported at 7:25 p.m. It was put under control almost two hours later.

The building is occupied by offices and call center agencies. Witnesses and investigators said the fire originated from a room rented by a recruitment agency called First MagnSun.

The firm's human resource manager, Louisa Reyes, said they heard a loud pop in their pantry before the lights went out. Shortly after, the office was filled with black smoke.

Reyes said she and about 20 of her officemates immediately left the 10th floor, which housed a call center company and another private office.

In his report, Snr. Insp. Salvador Narbaiz, Pasig City arson investigator, said no one was hurt or killed in the fire that reached the third alarm.

He estimated that about ₱3 million worth of valuables were destroyed in the incident.

Authorities have yet to determine the exact cause of the fire, but some firemen on the scene said it could have been caused by faulty wiring.

Cops looking for ex-boxer in driver's slay

By Tina G. Santos

A FORMER BOXER who knocked out boxing champion Manny Pacquiao in 1996, when the latter was just starting his professional career, is now being sought by the police after he was accused of killing a truck driver in Tondo, Manila yesterday morning.

Former light flyweight boxer Dante Fernandez, also known as Dodong Matti, 36, a needle vendor and resident of Nepomuceno Street in Tondo, was tagged as the prime suspect in the death of Ernesto Orpiza, 54, driver of a Isuzu Wide Mouth elf truck.

Investigators said the incident happened at 5:45 a.m. at the corner of M. Isaguez and Cupang streets.

The victim—according to his helper Angelito Bay and Marites Sebastian—was driving the dump truck of Cayetano Street and was about to make a turn when he accidentally sideswiped the suspect's tricycle and, spilling all of his passengers on the street.

The police said the suspect tried to talk to the victim but the latter ignored him, driving off to his truck.

This angered Fernandez, who ran after the driver and grabbed him repeatedly, police added. The suspect fled after the incident.

Artists up in arms vs NCCA exec, 'Palace manipulation'

By Tina G. Santos

MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE Concerned Artists of the Philippines (yesterday) staged a rally in front of the commission's office in Intramuros, Manila, to protest what they claimed was Malacañang's manipulation of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts.

Among the participants were National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera and painter Cecile Tuvera.

The protesters called for the ouster of NCCA executive director Cecile Guidote-Alvarez who they claimed was not qualified for the post as she was cited a Career Eligible Service Officer.

They also assailed her of illegally releasing the commission's funds.

"We attempted to move the National Endowment Funds for Culture and the Arts without following proper procedures. The initiative has now multimillion peso projects and finances them with NCCA funds," they claimed.

"We demand the immediate release of (cultural) treasures and her replacement by any eligible executive director who will abide by the principles of the NCCA and handle the management and operations of the commission with honesty and professionally," the protesters said.

The artists also opposed an alleged move by Malacañang to appoint Education Undersecretary Silvina Lahrador as the new NCCA chair.

"Undersecretary Lahrador been close with the Unduhanes on study deals concerning the transpo(rtation) funds," they alleged.

Lumbera and Alvarez should listen to the artists. "She should listen to them or else, they might lose interest in joining NCCA projects," he told the reporters.

Alvarez said the protest action was "initiated by people cultivating to become chair."

"But I am open to dialogue," she said the forums although she stressed that she would not step down from her post.

"Let's sit down and talk, let's go through a process. I will answer, but let's show the facts over and don't create lies," Alvarez, who is also the presidential assistant on culture, said.

NATIONAL Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera joins protesters calling for the ouster of National Commission on Culture and the Arts executive director Cecile Guidote-Alvarez. Alan Lim

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
3/F Intl Bldg., 1600 San Miguelano
Cor. General Luna St., Intramuros, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/establishments have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
1 CLOUD COMPANY, INC. Unit 11A Legaspi Suites, 121 Salcedo St., Legaspi Vill., Makati City	Takeshi Tashiro Japanese	Sales Consultant
021 HAIR PHILS., INC. Unit 104 C.P. Garcia Condominium 120 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Masaaki Morimoto Japanese	Senior Hair Stylist Hair Styling Consultant
1SBU ILM, INC. Unit 1101B Tower, 1600 Ave., Pasay City	Brian Kevin William Wan Singaporean	Consultant for Film Engineering Management
7IL DOR GOLF & BEACH CLUB CORP. Unit 1802 Philippine Stock Ave., San Pedro St., Salcedo Makati City	Pierre Yves Japanese	General Manager
A1W IMPORT & EXPORT LTD. CO. Unit 1A2 Juan Luna Plaza, 956 Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Wilong Gong Chinese	Sales Supervisor
LIFE GAMES TRADING CO. LTD. 304 SSL Apartments St., Tondo, Manila	Jungkook Oh Korean	Sales Representative
ANGEL PHILIPPINES AMONG NATIONS, INC. Ben Yen Center, 2841 St. cor. 3rd Ave., Crescent Park West, BGC, Taguig City	Romano, John Henry British	Director
EVERMAX CORPORATION Unit 1802 Antonio Arnaiz Plaza, 73 Antonio G. Arnaiz Ave., Cor. San Lorenzo	Lim Ho Kwon Korean	Consultant
HANA 1 NETWORK SYSTEM, INC. 121 Buena Ave., Bonanza Pandacan City	Woo Suk Choi Korean	Area Manager
LOGICARE, INC. 3/F Trafalgar Plaza Makati City	Mel Oprah Cruz Australian	Country Head
HERITAGE GLASS AND COMPANY, INC. Unit 1F-01 Tower 1, PSE Plaza, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Yoshiaki Murakami Japanese	Executive Chef
HIRING MANPOWER INTERNATIONAL SERVICES, INC. Old VIP Bldg., 1160 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Michael Scully Irish	Representative
LEXXE ENTERPRISES, INC. 26/F Rockpoint Corporate Tower, Lot 3rd Royal Ave., Makati City	Daren Anne Wilson Indonesian	1) Staff/Customer Support Staff
LEXXE ENTERPRISES, INC. 26/F Rockpoint Corporate Tower, Lot 3rd Royal Ave., Makati City	Lo Tung Shan Indonesian	Customer Support Staff
KIM SUPERMART NEW CORP. 1 Home Depot Marcy Aquino Ave., Las Piñas, Paranaque City	Young Hun Lee (also KIM) Korean	Manager
P. KIM INC. 21-B Almeda St., Manila, Manila	Yongsun Cho (also at KIM) Korean	Operation Manager
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 26/F Rockpoint Corporate Tower, Lot 3rd, 3rd Royal Ave., Makati City	Chew Yee Chong Cantonese	Operation Analyst Mandarin Speaking
VALMILL DRILLING TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC. 18 Road 1 cor. Road 3, Pag-ibig Caloocan City	Joseph Pat Kuwan British	Drilling Consultant
VITELEASE GLOBAL SOLUTIONS, INC. 3/F Cyberscape Alpha, Eastwood Cyberpark, Bagumbayan, Quezon City	Vanessa Anne Dominic	Customer Service Assistant
SUMITOMO PHILIPPINES, INC. 14th Floor, SL Salcedo Village, Makati City	Kazuaki Watanabe Japanese	Project Manager

If any party has any information/objection to the abovementioned applications, please communicate with this Regional Office.

EDMUNDO C. ACHARON
OIC, Regional Director

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
PCA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 929-6041 • 920-8774 • 929-8987

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Agriculture invites qualified bidders/applicants to participate in the bidding of "Lot (3) unit Generator, 100 KVA" with an Approved Budget Contract For P1,750,000.00.

Bid documents shall be available at the BFAR Property Section starting **September 17-21, 2007** upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of P500.00.

Eligibility documents, technical and financial proposal of three prospective bidders shall be opened on **October 8, 2007** at 10:00 A.M. at the BFAR Conference Room, 2/F PCA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, but not later than **2:30 p.m.** on **October 8, 2007** and shall be opened in the same time and date in the presence of the participating bidders.

For more information, please call the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 929-8987.

The Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal is evaluated by the BAC to be most advantageous to the government. This BAC reserves the right to disqualify any bidder who has failed to any requirement or has been guilty of misrepresentation in the preparation of bids, or have a questionable track record with the Bureau.

(Sgd.) MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.
Director

MetroBriefs

Witness in UP student's death to come out

THE HUMAN Rights Committee of the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG) who was the last person seen with suspected hazing victim Eric Anthony Mendez may soon come forward. The law committee yesterday by NCPAG dean Alex Brillantes Jr. who told the lawyers that Arnel Pardo alias has expressed his willingness to appear at his office to air his side on the incident. Mendez, an NCPAG student council member, was declared dead on arrival on Aug. 27 at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center. An autopsy report revealed that he had been beaten up badly, bolstering suspicions that he was a victim of hazing. Arellano had appeared at the college class. Brillantes has repeatedly called on Arellano to report to his office to tell him what he knows about Mendez's death.

Jeannette I. Andrade

'Pink Line Project' is MMDA's latest

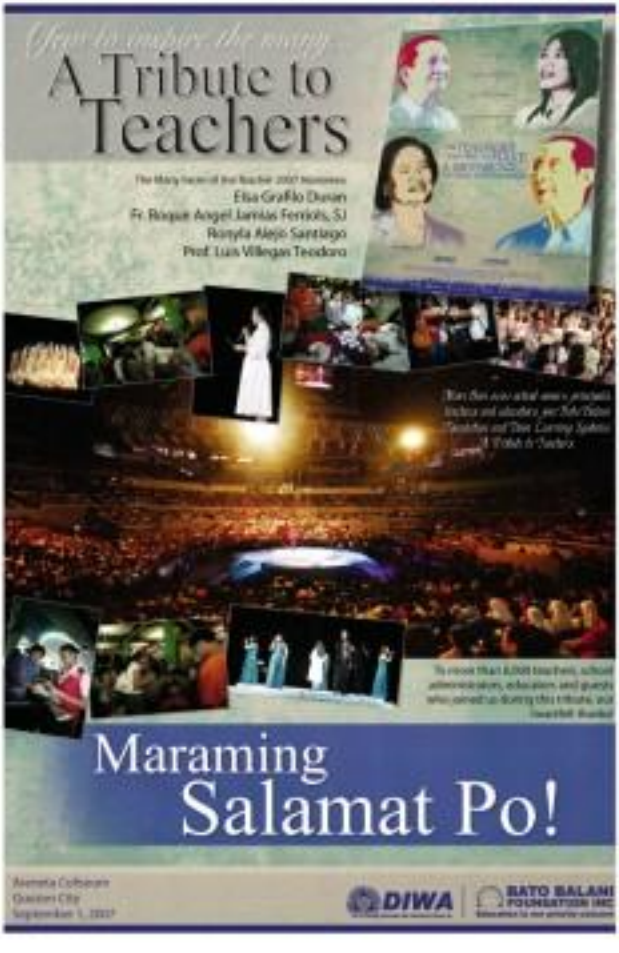
AFTER street bazaar, bicycle lanes, pedestrian overpasses, and even public urinals, another fixture is the streets of Metro Manila will soon bear Bayani Fernando's favorite color: pink. This time, the chief of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority is bent on painting all the sidewalks of major and secondary roads around the metropolis with two-inch-wide pink lines. Its objective: To stop drivers from parking their vehicles on the sidewalks. The message, it seems, is for the dismantled. The pink lines separate the pavement from the curb. Aptly dubbed the "Pink Line Project," the undertaking is part of the MMDA's effort to strictly enforce illegal parking laws, Fernando said. "Lanya mo sabi ko (the sidewalks is) the people who face the risk of being sideswiped by running vehicles because they cannot walk freely on the sidewalks," he said in a statement. He reminded that violators would be issued traffic violation receipts for illegal parking, and face the risk of being towed once spotted.

Ed Par

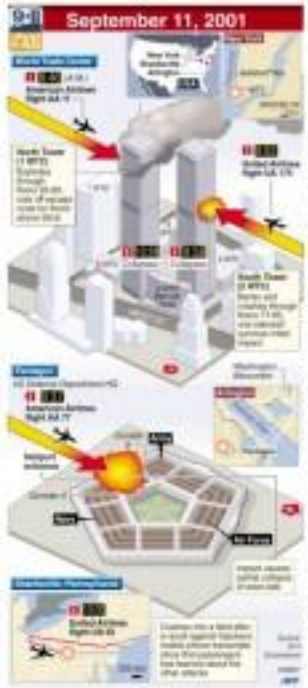
Cop kills 2 suspected holdup men

TWO holdup suspects were killed by a policeman early yesterday morning in Las Piñas City. The victims, identified as Jose Sotelo and Jessie Solina Jr., were pronounced dead on arrival at the Las Piñas District Hospital. Both were residents of Muntinlupa City. Investigators disclosed that the two men were spotted at the corner of St. Joseph Avenue and Gomez Street in Barangay Pulang Lupa I at around 2 a.m. yesterday, carrying firearms. When the two policemen, PO3 Eden Limbauan and PO3 Eduardo Sergano, approached the suspects to accost them, Sotelo pulled out a knife and stabbed Limbauan who fell to the ground. Sergano, meanwhile, pulled out his service firearm and shot the two suspects. Recovered from the suspects were two cal. .38 revolvers and the knife used by Sotelo.

Julie M. Aurelio



US still at risk six years after 9/11 terror attacks



Al-Qaida chief vows to escalate Iraq war

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED States remains at risk from attacks even though it may be better prepared to fight the "war on terror," US security chiefs warned on Monday on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the Sept. 11 strikes.

The warning comes after exiled al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden vowed an escalation in the war in Iraq in a new video released to mark Tuesday's anniversary of the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

"While we have successfully ruled out further attacks against terrorist attacks, the fact remains that we are still a nation at risk," said Michael Chertoff, the head of the Department of Homeland Security in that new set up immediately after 9/11 to protect the United States from future attacks.

"We continue to face a persistent threat to our homeland over the next several years," he told a congressional hearing on Wednesday as "confronting the evolving threat to the homeland six years after 9/11."

Despite maintaining a constant alert for possible al-Qaida attacks, authorities could not discount dangers posed by homegrown militants or self-motivated individuals or groups that imitated their own plots, he said.

"While no one can guarantee we will not face another terrorist strike in the next six years, if we allow ourselves to step back from the fight, if we allow our progress to halt, if we don't continue to build the necessary tools to stay ahead of terrorist threats, then we will most certainly suffer the consequences," he warned.

Chertoff announced proposed regulations requiring general aviation aircraft entering the United States to provide comprehensive passenger manifest information to US authorities prior to departure.

"This will help us prevent private aircraft from being used to bring potentially dangerous people or weapons into the United States," he said.

Also by the end of the year, the United States will be scanning virtually every container that came into the country by sea, he said.

Michael McConnell, the director of national intelligence, assured that the United States would "face a persistent and evolving terrorist threat over the next three years," citing the al-Qaida and Hezbollah groups as key concerns.

"My judge that the United States currently is in a heightened threat environment," McConnell said.

While al-Qaida would remain the "most serious terrorist threat," the Hezbollah militant group could stage an attack on the United States if it believed the US posed a direct threat to the group or to its alleged Iranian ban, he said.

Iran, which is at loggerheads with the United States over its nuclear ambitions, is a vocal supporter of Hezbollah, considered a "terrorist" group by Washington.

Asked by lawmakers whether al-Qaida was as strong as it was in 2001, McConnell said, "they have regained a significant level of their capability but are as strong" as six years ago.

He expressed concern that the international cooperation which led to arrests of Qaida's ability to attack the United States could "fade out as the Iraqi, 11 attacks becomes a distant memory. AFP

Time magazine ordered to pay Suharto $106M

SUHARTO

JAKARTA—INDONESIA'S Supreme Court has ordered Time magazine to pay $106 million to damages for defaming former dictator Suharto by alleging his family amassed $15 billion during his 32-year rule.

The May 1999 cover story in the magazine's Asian edition said much of that money had been transferred from Switzerland to trusts before Suharto stepped down amid riots and pro-democracy protests in 1998.

Suharto, who has also been accused of widespread rights abuses, had filed a lawsuit with the Central Jakarta district and later the Jakarta High Court, both of which ruled in Time's favor.

A panel of three Supreme Court judges, including a retired general who was in the military ranks during Suharto's administration, overturned the decisions on Aug. 31. The ruling ordered Time Inc. Asia and six employees to apologize in leading Indonesian magazines and newspapers as well as Time's Asian, European and Americas editions. AP

Wiretapping helped foil plot in Germany, says US

WASHINGTON—INFORMATION gained through a US wiretapping program much criticized by civil liberties advocates helped authorities foil alleged plots last week in Germany and Denmark, top US intelligence officials said on Monday.

US Director of Intelligence Michael McConnell said the surveillance program had made "significant contributions" in detecting and breaking up a suspected plot in Germany to bomb American installations. He cited them as a reason that the US Congress should reject attempts to restrict it.

"I allowed us to see and understand all the connections ... to al-Qaida," McConnell told a hearing of the Senate Homeland Security Committee.

The program also contributed to the arrests in Denmark of eight Muslims with suspected links to al-Qaida, on suspicion of planning a bomb attack, National Counterterrorism Center Director John Redd told reporters later.

McConnell said the surveillance program, which includes tapping the communications of foreign terrorism suspects, helped track links between those arrested in Germany and the Islamic Jihad Union, which he described as an al-Qaida affiliate.

After "a long process of monitoring and observation," authorities realized the suspects had obtained explosive liquids, he said. Reuters

Parents of missing girl say they are innocent

BITTLET, ENGLAND—THE PARENTS OF missing 4-year-old Madeleine McCann said he said his wife are totally confident of their innocence as they wait to learn whether they will face criminal charges in Portugal.

Portuguese police investigating the British girl's disappearance on May 3 from a hotel in southern Portugal say they expect to hand over their files to the prosecutor's office on Tuesday. Police named Kate and Gerry McCann as suspects on Friday.

"We have absolute confidence that, when all of the facts are presented together, we will be able to demonstrate that we played absolutely no part in Madeleine's abduction," Gerry McCann wrote late Monday in a blog on www.findmadeleine.com.

Police had hoped to submit their file on Monday but are now aiming for Tuesday spokesperson Olegario Sousa said. He declined to provide further details, citing Portugal's secrecy law covering ongoing police investigations.

Portuguese District lawyer Ana Cunha in Algarve's Portimão will review the case files, which contain details of forensic evidence and police interviews.

Sousa said he believed the prosecutor would quickly decide whether to take action.

Britain's Sky News reported that Portuguese police have found DNA evidence—a full match—indicating that Madeleine's body was in the trunk of a car the McCanns rented five weeks after her disappearance. The station cited unidentified sources. Police would not confirm the report.

Portugal's national police chief Alipio Ribeiro suggested on Monday night, however, that the forensic tests had not been conclusive. AP

Colombia captures top cocaine boss wanted by US

COLOMBIAN drug trafficker Diego Montoya, with his hands bound, arrives escorted by Colombian soldiers to a military base in Bogotá, on Monday, Sept. 10.

BOGOTÁ—COLOMBIA'S TOP DRUG LORD, who earned the title "boss of bosses" for smuggling hundreds of tons of cocaine to the United States, was captured on Monday the country's biggest narcotics arrest in a decade.

Soldiers surrounded Diego Montoya, also known as Don Diego, in a farmhouse where he was hiding with his mother and several other people near the western coffee town of Armenia, capping a move that covers pre-marathon.

He was on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted" list in the United States and was the subject of a $5 million reward. He is expected to be extradited to the United States for trial.

"This closes one compartment in the fight against drug trafficking, which is a matter of national security in Colombia," Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos told reporters.

The bearded 199 kg Montoya, known for his lowly physique and links to right-wing paramilitary militias, was turned over to law enforcement officials after arriving in the capital city Bogotá in a military plane wearing a black T-shirt, gray pants and handcuffs.

He helped found the Norte del Valle cartel, the only Colombian gang that still controls all areas of the business from the cultivation of coca plants, to production of cocaine and to exportation. Reuters

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Bin Laden taunts US on 9/11 anniversary

NEW YORK—AL-QAIDA CHIEF OSAMA BIN LADEN EULOGIZED one of the Sept. 11 hijackers in a video released on Tuesday's sixth anniversary of the attacks that still traumatize the United States.

BIN LADEN

As Americans remembered the almost 3,000 people killed, unrepaired bomb sites lie and security alert keeps the world on terrorist alert, Usa Sept bomb was detained in Ankara and Ukrainian plot launched a major operation on US military base after receiving threats.

The al-Qaeda leader who went in a call urgent at the new video available he gives a statement praising hijacker Walid al-Shehri, CIA said remains injured.

Bin Laden hailed the hijacker as a "young man who personally penetrated the most important degrees of danger and is coming among men, one of the 19 champions (now Allah) have mercy on them all," landowner said.

Al-Shehri, a Saudi national, was aboard American Airlines flight 11, the first jet to crash into the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11, 2001.

SITE Group, a US-based organization that monitors Islamic militant websites, said it had a copy of the video which lasts 47 minutes and does not include its 9/11 images of Bin Ladin.

SITE Center said the video is titled "The Wills of the Heroes of the Night on New York and Washington. The Will of the Hero (in the Sar Hijri: Abu Muhammad Walid al-Shehri, Wills is Pursued by Sheikh Osama bin Ladin."

In a tape released on Friday, Bin Laden mocked the United States as "weak" and threatened to enslave the rich nation.

Several of the latest video emerged before the United States was to hold ceremonies to remember the dead from New York's Twin Towers, the US Defense Department headquarters in Washington and a hijacked plane that crashed into a field in Pennsylvania.

In Washington on the anniversary, Turkish police defused a powerful bomb hidden under a bus to current Ankara where a link to Sept. 11 was immediately made.

The Turkish capital's governor Ahmet Onal said the bomb was hidden under a bus in a car park. "The terrorists took off the police warned a possible catastrophe," he told journalists.

Domestic police launched a major operation at the Spangdahlem US military airport after 20 buses escorted threats by telephone police said.

The bus assisted an anonymous call on Monday but a police spokesperson said a man pending it was a hoax.

In New York, where 2,749 people were killed when two hijacked planes plowed into the World Trade Center, rescue workers went to read out the names of the dead in a solemn ceremony.

Dubbed as just ever, most of the ceremony will be held at a park near Ground Zero, the area where the Twin Towers once stood, and not on the site, where a memorial and other new buildings are being constructed. AFP

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Editor Teddyboy S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Delos

■ Master of his trade /A32

NCAA Final 4 showdowns begin

LETTERMEN Roland Jasa (center) of JRU's Lions is in close battle contested domination-stand stands over by the Knights.

Red Lions battle Cards; Knights take on Bombers

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HAVING ACCOMPLISHED WHAT HE SET out to do in the first place, Stephen coach Louie Isaac has let the pressure-cooker going in the NCAA Final Four.

"Isay ano kasi eh," said the first-year league MVP. "Both in our days in the Lions, when our tournament the elimination, we ended up winning the title."

"That was our view," added Isaac. "Now it's their [San Beda's] turn."

But the Cardinals, despite achieving that preseason goal of making the Final Four right on Yeng's maiden year at head coach, are not resting their will simply march into the Araneta Coliseum today and willingly pay the role of Lion fodder.

"We still fight and try to beat San Beda and that will not [be] happen easy," said Mapua skipper Sean Go, who accompanied Isaac during Monday's press conference among Final Four contenders.

Red Lions coach Frankie Lim didn't attend the session but was present at Jhun and team captain Yousif Aljamal on his behalf.

"We learned from what happened last year, we can't take things lightly," said Aljamal, who will see action after sitting out the last two games of the elimination.

The PBA-bound Aljamal, who was four and more of a consistency that ended the league this season, was referring to the 2016 season when the Lions struggled to beat the Cardinals in the first game of the Final Four.

As any coach defending champion San Beda has a target and...a coach to have advantage—to flush against Mapua, having finished the elimination on equivalent one-win.

It's the same edge as coach Aldin Ayo will carry against San Beda U in the other semifinal match. Although for the Bombers, this twice-to-beat edge is the least of their woes.

"[Lions] coach Louie Alo has been there [Final Four] many times before, while the three of us [Jhun and me] are just first-timers," said JRU coach Aced Pumaneda.

"We know what to do and to stay healthy with the pressure," added Pumaneda, who worked at that during his 10 years in the NBA, PBL and PBA.

But Alo has unusual respect for Pumaneda, whose team dealt the fatigue first defeat this season, saying proper execution of plays will be the key in the series.

If San Beda and Lyceus proved, Game 1 of the best-of-three finals series next week, according to league officials.

Bayron, V'roman seek RP Am repeats

JAY BAYRON AND CARMELETTE VILLARO-MAN seek their second straight titles as they head talent-laden teams in today's opening round of the 2007 Philippine Amateur Golf Open Championships at the Bella Vista and Country Club in Iloilo City.

With the absence of Arthur and two other junior golf standouts at the time, the prospects of a repeat victory seems brighter for Villaroman in the five-day event conducted by the Union of Golf Associations of the Philippines.

Arthur, who played in two pro-tournaments on the Ladies Asiapean Tour recently, and PCF-ID teammates Miki Ocon and Cyrus Rodriguez were unable to recover themselves from key study games at Pendleton Academy in Florida.

Tipped to crowd Villaroman at the top are Children Ilenda, Brenden dela Paz, Anya Tanpiengco, Lora Roberts, Crystal Sopeno and Louise Elizondo.

Bayron is expected to encounter stiff resistance from Berlie Reyme and Mark Fernando, the co-winners of the recent national team qualifier at the division in Silang, Cavite, as well as fellow RP teens members Anthony Fernando, Rommel Khalin and Mike Bilar.

Iloilo Golf and Country Club president Peñaloi Lozada, IGCC vice president Mink Rivera and IGCC secretary general Jun Gallardo will hit the ceremonial drive to kick off the event, featuring a 4-stroke play format in the first two days.

The top 12 players in the men's division and the top 10 in the women's side after 36 holes will advance to the match play phase starting Friday.

UCAA CAGING

Doves tie dour Generals

THE ST. FRANCIS OF Assisi Doves brought down the undefeated Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals, 79-61, Monday night to claim a share of the lead with them in the 69th University Athletic Association of the Philippines basketball tournament at the Ateneo College gym.

GAMES TODAY
(JLIC Ateneo Gym)
11 a.m. — (W) UST vs. FEU
11:30 a.m. — (W) UE vs. UPHM
1 p.m. — Ust Pilipinas College vs. PCU-Dasmariñas
3:30 p.m. — (W) UP vs. Adamson

The Doves posted their sixth win in seven outings after the first round.

Meanwhile, eight Generals, including key men John Valdevieso and Nikko Bohulano, were suspended for one game following last night's fight-marred clash with La Salle-Dasmariñas.

Other matches: Arellano College 8 Science and Technology 16 (3-6, PBBL 3B); Far Eastern College 2-0 (1-1) Immaculate Conception College of Nursing, 10-63.

Jins plunge into action in nat'l meet

NATIONAL TEAM MEMBERS MIO ISHIDA, Asian Games silver medalists Tokoroko Go and Marie Antoinette Flores lead the cream of the country's taekwondo crop vying for top honors in the 2007 Samsung Best of the Best National Taekwondo Championships which kicks off today at the Quirino Activity Center in Makati.

Elimination matches in the senior men's and women's divisions start off hostilities at 10 a.m. with the opening rites set at 4 p.m.

Aside from members of the national team gearing up for various overseas competitions — including the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand in December and the Asian Beijing Olympics — fans are sure to see the children and junior ranks roll into action.

The other big guns competing are Jupoy Linardo, Donald Geisler III, Michael Fernandez, Shin Briones, Ernesto Mendoza III, Billy Corral, Kathleen Denise Abreu, Gretchen Arnaiz, Adriana Stribuilas, Arielle Catalan, Jeffrey Figueroa, Manuel Sheen Jr., Cristelle Reyes, Esther Marie Singson and Elmie Elaine Abes.

To be classified in the seniors and juniors divisions are seven weight categories, including lightweight, fly, bantam, feather, light, welter and middleweight. Six weight titles are up for grabs in the children's class (11-13 years old).

The eliminations in the juniors and children divisions will be held Friday and Saturday and the finals in both classes on Sunday.

The opening day will be graced by Samsung officials, led by CEO Sponsor Jhun, VP for IT Kim Jung-soon, VP for consumer Jung Dong-ha, GM for marketing Jerry Lacson, and related press manager Angie Limbaco.

ATTEMPT: Emmanuel Mariano (left) and La Salle's Paololo Villanueva race for the loose ball in Sunday's match-up by the Blue Eagles. 89-81. ... LEO M. DIAZ

Green Archers ready to avert Warrior sweep

By Jasmine W. Payo

AT EVEN THERE WAS A TIME FOR THE UNIVERSITY of the East to worry about completing a sweep of The Shine Runners round, that would be the hours between today and Thursday.

Not so. Today is the last game of each round that UE will be meeting a La Salle team that is not only producing at the right time, but also aching to get over a painful defeat at the hands of its archrival.

Please note, in the last that La Salle badly needs to win in Thursday-ending against UE.

"We don't want to dwell on the past," said coach Percy Pamanero, denying talks that the Green Archers plan to prevent some their shirt loss to the Blue Eagles, 89-87, in the UAAP men's basketball tournament last Sunday.

"I think we played well in that game. They (Warriors) just shot very well. It could have gone either way."

The Green Archers, however, will focus on what is within their grasp. A victory over the Warriors will assure La Salle of at least a tie for the second twice-to-beat advantage.

"At this stage, we're still playing to spare," said Pamanero. "We make a run and then we relax."

The Warriors, mentored by Pamanero's younger brother Uldado, overpowered the Archers, 96-76, in the first round.

Still, Pamanero thinks that his Archers have a shot in halting a 14-0 sweep that will earn the Warriors a slot to the best-of-three Finals.

"I think we're gonna (since the first round)," he said. "It has been a learning process for us. We're still feeling our way (through the) league actually. Being away from the limelight for one year (due to the league suspension), you can really see the difference."

More bad news for the Warriors: La Salle has seven more contention to win that game. La Salle and Ateneo, tied for second at 9-4, and Ateneo's win assures it a Stepped 2 spread that no longer is playing for anything.

That means the Blue Eagles have a clear shot at win No. 11.

"This team is capable," said Pamanero of La Salle's chances.

Olympians set out for Naascu title clincher vs Hawks today

ST. CLOSE FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP slimdiet today when it goes up again against University of Manila in the National athletes Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) men's basketball title series at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The Olympians trampled the Hawks, 86-72, last Saturday to zero in on their maiden title in their third consecutive finals appearance in the seven-team-old league.

With its old rebellion shackled by UM defenses led by Rudolf Pusto exploded with 21 points to tie the balance in favor of UT.

Still, UT coach Vic Yanson said they will not let their guard down against the Hawks, who are totally capable of upsetting the best-of-three series.

LOCAL STAGE
Ninoy Aquino Stadium
3 p.m. — (Men's D) (Game 2)

Ateneo Jobin Suntay

Jerich remains confident of coach Ato Tolentino's capacity to turn the series around.

"He is a persuasive coach, he is capable of getting the best out of every player," Golez General said of the five-time Coach of the Year.

"We will play very hard and give it our best shot," said Tolentino, who steered Philippine Christian U to the NCAA title and UE to its 8th straight Finance season, capped by a historic 42-game winning streak. More Anthony Aquino

Chandler shines as Koreans flog Aces

Jose Mazares

BANQUIN CHANDLER WOOD hot night from the start as BTBC1 Powerized shades, 102-86, last night in the 2007-2008 Philippine Basketball Association Preseason Games at The Arena in San Juan.

Unlike his first debut against the MIC-rour Dragons, Chandler got his rhythm early and with a support cast of Jin Woo Hwang, Heo Jung Joo and Hyun Ho Lee, the Koreans never looked back after taking a 26-19 spread in the opening quarter.

The former Purefoods import struggled completely during BTBC1 opener opposite Tabloan but picked up enough steam just in time to hold off the Jim Dreaner-powered Dragons.

This time, Chandler fueled a 16-6 run after a 21 Quitalsan heeltly gave Alaska an 18-17 lead on a putback to put the Koreans on the driver's seat for the remainder of the match.

Rookie Kim Seon Joong finish with Tony Dela Cruz and Benny Ilagan to keep the Aces within striking distance, 44-41, but the Aces couldn't sustain what they started and dropped back into a hole.

Chandler paced the Koreans with 34 points while Hwang and Import Gideon Cummings added 17 and 13 each for BTBC1, which will face San Miguel Beer today before wrapping up its elim against Red Bull and Coca-Cola.

As a team team, the gamers of BTBC1 will not be inferred on the standings.

The Game:

BTBC1 102—Chandler 34, Hwang 17, Cummings 13, Jin 10, Ryu 8, Yang 7, Lee 7, Park 5, Jeon 2, Heo 0, Seo 0.

ALASKA 86—Ilagan 15, Miller 13, Ilaw 10, Rapid-Jones 7, Dela Cruz 7, Pennisi 6, Calma 5, Ross 5, Gonzales 5, Reyes 5, Lanot 3, Lanot 0.

Quarters: 26-19, 26-41, 81-67, 102-86

Harsh truths—no symbols—for Pacquiao

LOS ANGELES—THE FACTUAL RESPONSE to the Manny Pacquiao, the most famous Filipino of our time.

"When I was pregnant with our first son, we had no equipment and my husband slapped me... he forced me to walk in circles so many times in the vicinity of Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital in order to induce me to give birth to our first son, securing two of intentionally refusing to give birth."

That statement forms part of an affidavit filed with the Los Angeles Superior Court which was acquired by the in-person on Monday.

Pacquiao is credibly busy preparing for his next fight, so he's free to trust this to those gossip or pure rubbish.

The case itself could also be both significant and irrelevant to Pacquiao that it cannot be exposed in some in the way when he picks which pair of fighting shoes to wear in his next big fight on Dec. 8 in Las Vegas.

BARE EYE

Ricardo Trinidad

However, it is happens that the accused in the case is someone Pacquiao openly trusts.

The same person, entitled as a part by subversion, has visibly appeared between and disorder in Pacquiao's gated Wildwire apartment located on the classy side of La Brea.

Needless to say, we find it our duty to warn the boxing hero he would be unwilling more than a ton of issues re-

pellent when he returns here for the final push in his training against Mexico's Marco Antonio Barrera.

Before anything else, my apologies for again reporting on The Talkies's mess, an issue we had tried to put to rest. For the record, we did make a point last week that the columns on the case of the alleged pest would be the last on the matter.

However, we have no choice but break our word after it turned out that truth had been trampled by the subject of that column, who maintains his innocence on headlines, and, for no impending, case or complaint whatsoever.

* * *

Anyway, as those we're not out to mangle anybody's reputation, we will no longer name names.

Of course, we must Pacquiao already knows who and what we mean, so he can pick it from there why Los Angeles cops had to be called into his apartment the other Sunday.

Maybe this need not be told, but, in order to get his side, we called the accused, met with him, and presented the court papers yesterday.

Well, at first, he tried to brush them off, saying he did not know anything about the case. Then, in a silly turnaround, he now claimed Pacquiao already had a copy of the complaint, insisting that was all legitimate.

"By the time plays, why are you covering me like a smoking Tic nobody here," the representative the reporter.

* * *

He had a point there. So, without exactly apologizing, I retreated, took the usual 90-minute walk on the Broadway streets back to this borrowed bed space; he did a new midterm breakup.

But hold it, please. I was set to depart the court papers in the garbage bin. But, upon reading the fine print, it would become clear that the case against the accused was true, and supported by a restraining order.

Here are samples to some number RSM450670 of the Los Angeles Superior Court (3111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012), there's a strict order for the accused "not to do the following things to the protected people listed," namely his wife and two kids:

a) Harass, attack, strike, threaten, assault (sexually or otherwise), hit, follow, stalk, molest, destroy personal property, disturb the peace, keep under surveillance, or block movements.

b) Contact (either directly or indirectly), or telephone, or send messages or mail or e-mail.

The accused must stay at least 100 yards away from the persons listed, whether they be at home, in school or on the job.

The accused also cannot own, possess, have, buy or try to buy, receive, or try to receive, or to own other way put a gun or firearm.

The restraining order will be in-pursed until 11:59 p.m., October 30, 2009 on the accused, described in the order sheet as with "black hair, brown eyes, age 30s."

* * *

You are, it was a saucy change sheet filed by the battered wife, but we still turned leave the papers at Wild Card, in case Pacquiao would care to pick them up later in the month.

There are more salient points, but space is of the essence here.

Here's hoping Pacquiao does not have all the labels and descriptions of his apartment member, who's said to advise the boxing superstar to smoke and other matters, in purely metaphoric—the way we had foolishly made it appear earlier.

This case who is being monitored by the police here, as he basks in the glory of Pacquiao's fame, is no ordinary insignificant issue.

He's the Real Deal, a poor man's Bangsta, and there's nothing symbolic in this.

SPORTSWATCH

Del Rosario, David seek title clinchers in Subic jet ski leg

TOP CONTENDERS RACE FOR A WC TC battle when the championship round of the 2007 Petron JSAT National Jet Ski Series on Saturday at the Subic Bay Marina Complex in Subic.

Petron will host the two premiere Expert Runabout 1200 Class and the Master 4-stroke class where defending champion Paul del Rosario and top Master rider Bobbie David are seeking title-clinching victories.

Del Rosario hopes to wrap up the Rider of the Year award in a field consisting many of his challengers while David is gunning for a second victory in one leg having Wally Portillo to claim the Master Rider of the Year plum.

Jove Marge Sharma aims to establish himself as the No. 1 female rider as she tries to capture the Women's Runabout title.

RACING TOP

BY TOP CHOICE

DESERT BOUNDS: The RP Davis Cup squad (from left) Arcilla, Torres, Marcelo and Tanco.

GROUP 1 FINAL

RP Cuppers all set vs Kuwaitis

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NOW JUST A SUN-SCORCHED DESERT and a dangerous band of Kuwaiti netters stand in the way of the Philippines' long journey back to Davis Cup's Group I.

A crack team hammered by 9th-American Cecil Mamiit and Eric Taino Elco to Akuhirl, Bawadi, on Monday to battle the Kuwaitis in their Asia-Oceania Group 2 tie on Sept. 21-23.

"We have [good] chances," Cde Castro, who will make his debut as RP coach, told yesterday's PSA Forum at Shakey's UN Avenue. "We have the edge against Kuwait. We are familiar with the players on the other side."

The Philippines never met the Kuwaitis, 3-2, the last time they clashed in a Davis Cup tie in 2002 in Manila.

Kuwait No.1 Mohammad Ghareeb, however, got Mamiit's number during their Doha Asian Games encounter last year. And their delegation coach can see opening day jitter might dictate the mood of the tie, according to Castro.

Johnny Arcilla and Patrick John Tierro are the other members of the squad that won over Pakistan and New Zealand this year. Mamiit, Marcelo Tanco is non-playing captain.

The Philippines reserves a Group 1 slot – a feat it achieved 16 years ago with a team built around Joseph Lizardo and Bobby Angeles – until a victory over Kuwait.

The country's biggest Davis Cup achievement came in 1991, when another squad that included Felix Barrientos, Roland Jr., Gamy Pelaburg and Danilo Pile, topped Group I with sweeping victories over China and Japan.

That group title gave the Filipinos a berth in the World Group qualifying where they eventually lost to eventual Swedish side, 5-0.

"That's what keeping us motivated," said the 21-year-old Tierro, who also appeared in the session sponsored by Shakey's and Pepsi together with the 27-year-old Arcilla. "We're definitely ready for Oak."

Mamiit and Tanco will fly straight to Kuwait from the United States, according to Castro.

The other members of the Kuwait team are top netters in their first ever Group II final are Mohammad Ghaleb Alfilfy, skipper Faheem Mohammad and Ali Kamaal.

Castro said the Filipinos would have to beat playing in temperatures between 40 and 50 degrees Celsius in the open-air hardcourt of the Sanaya Al Mizaraa Tennis Center.

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SPORTS

Master of his trade

ROGER Federer's just two "Slams" shy of history.

NEW YORK—ROGER FEDERER'S DEFEAT of Novak Djokovic in the US Open final on Sunday lacked the panache of some of his previous Grand Slam wins, but what it showed was a player who is the master of his trade.

Like Tiger Woods leading going into the final day of a major golf tournament, Federer, clay-courts apart, is proving to be unbeatable when the winning post is in sight.

The Swiss maestro, at 26, has now reached 16 Grand Slam finals and he has won 12 of them, which considers into a loss even amazing conversion rate of 85 percent. Only Rafael Nadal on clay is likely to the last two years has bettered him.

The recipe for such success, he says, is **learning from all he has gone through as an** unmatched professional career dating back to 2006 and knowing how to close out the big games.

"I didn't lose a set in the last three matches, **but they were close and I came through,**" he said. "It's probably because I'm experienced and I'm confident about my play.

"The other guys missed their chances. In the end having beating (Andy) Roddick, (Nikolay) Davydenko and (Djokovic, all in **straight sets, is an incredible effort for me.**"

Federer is also a sharp and enthusiastic observer of the way the sport is developing over the course of the years.

When he first started out, he told Pete Sampras was the dominant force in tennis and "out-and-out serve-and-volleyers like Boris Becker and Stefan Edberg were still to be found competing for the Grand Slam titles.

"The young Federer says he modelled his early game on them but "and the foresight to see that things were changing.

"The new rising generation came along when returning and passing shots were **made easier. It was harder to attack in some** ways," he said.

"But at the same time that helps me now because I do have the game to attack. I do have the solid rallies, I do have the opportunities and the option of I have to.

"It's good that I did take some chances when I was young. It's been a long road. I've had to work hard on my game." AFP

Sharapova drops to No. 4

NEW YORK—US OPEN SEMIFINALIST ESTI-MATE Rajaraman moved up to No. 2 in the WTA Tour rankings Monday, climbing two places behind Justine Henin despite a straight-set loss to the Belgian in Saturday's **final of the season's last Grand Slam.**

With Jelena Jankovic in third, Maria Sharapova dropped from No. 2 to No. 4 after **no less title defender** as Flushing Meadows ended with a third-round upset loss.

Venus Williams climbed five spots to No. 9 in the rankings Monday morning after she and her sister, No. 7 Serena, are both in the top 10 **for the first time in nearly two** years—even though both lost in straight sets at the US Open in Flushing. AP

Sponsored by Cyrex

US not fixing rugby roster even if it's 'broke'

IRON PELLIS, FRANCE—COACH PETER Thorburn has an interesting philosophy for his team's Pacific World Cup game against Tonga. Don't change a losing formula.

Although the All Eagles lost, 28-18, in Tokyo last to Lote on Saturday in their opening Group A game, the way the underdog Americans made the defending world champion toil for victory was widely seen as a moral victory.

So Thorburn has named an unchanged **team for Wednesday's Tonga game.**

"Some people think it is code going in with the same team, but we think it is the best way to go forward at the moment," he said.

And he said the Americans wouldn't change their game plan for the Tongans.

Tonga has optimistically set its sights on qualifying by ending in the top two of a group that also contains South Africa, England and Samoa. AP

LITHUANIA'S Linas Kleiza (left) defends France's Tony Parker. Kleiza and Parker are just two of international stars in the NBA seeing action in the Pilot Europe cup.

Lithuania nips France

SHIGHEI, XINJIANG—LITHUANIA LIMITED Tony Parker to 11 points and sidelined three-time champion France, 88-72, on Monday to remain one of two unbeaten teams at the European Basketball Championship.

Simonas Jasikevicius had 14 points and seven assists, and set up Eurostars Sabonakas and Darius Songaila for key baskets.

"They were stronger than us, that's it," said Parker, who was held 14 points below his tournament average.

Also in Group E, Marco Belinelli scored six of his 17 points in overtime to help Italy eliminate Turkey, 84-75.

Toronto Raptors center Andrea Bargnani had been of his 12 points in the extra period, as Italy overcame an early 15-point deficit.

"All of the games the teams were making for Bargnani, and in overtime he showed he knows how to score and Turkey froze," Italy coach Carlo Recalcati said.

Turkey was led by 34 points from Hidayet Turkoglu.

Like Lithuania, Slovenia won its fifth in as many games, moving Germany, 77-67—a result that qualified France for the quarterfinals.

Lithuania next plays Slovenia on Wednesday the top spot in Group F. France plays last-place Turkey in its final game. The winner between Italy and Germany will take the final berth from the group to the quarterfinals. AP

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SPORTS WATCH

LGBA series starts Friday

MEMBERS OF THE Lucrin Basketball Women's Association (LGBA) gear up for battle at Lucky Chan Sports Complex (Stg. Cubao, San Francisco, San Pablo City) as the LGBA 7-stop derby commences formally start tomorrow (Friday, Sept. 12). LGBA members must submit entries tomorrow, Thursday, Sept. 11 at LGBA office (09157909, 8240573 and 8240691) by 12:00 noon 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Dimagiba rewards are also kept on Sun Juan Coliseum on Sept. 18 and 23. All proceed, LGBA has 248 members.

SJC Derby: kicks off today

THE SECOND ROUND of the SJC 2nd Anniversary 9-stop derby gets going today at the San Juan Coliseum. Today's 3-stop round will feature some 50 fights. The 3-stop finale will be held on Saturday, Sept. 13. A grand-slam prize worth one-line will be divided among the winners. PR manager Renato Sheen also announced that all Association stop win valuable appliances in the raffle draw. ECC No Entry Fee Events! Pito Sine Gank "Shake" starts tomorrow, for details, call 7250060 and 7268963.

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Exports jumped 4.5% in July to $4.2B

Electronics recover with 5.1% growth

By Michelle P. Remo

EXPORTS ROSE AT A FASTER PACE OF 4.5 PERCENT to $4.2 billion in July from a year ago as electronics rebounded from the previous month's contraction.

Electronics exports, accounting for 58 percent of the total earnings for July, rose 5.1 percent to $2.46 billion.

In June, exports rose by a measly 1.3 percent to $4.12 billion as electronics exports contracted by 1.7 percent.

In July, imports rose by a measly 1.6 percent to $4.53 billion as electronics exports contracted by 1.7

EXPORTS >>

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■ 5 banks offer to fund gov't buyout of MRT /B5

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Ayala allots ₱2.5B to buy back own shares

By Elizabeth Sanchez Lacson

AYALA CORP., ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S biggest conglomerates, yesterday implemented a plan that will enable it to generate its shares price against a volatile market by buying up to ₱2.5 billion of its own shares in the stock market.

Ayala's move, however, has not induced other conglomerates—SM Investments Corp. of tycoon Henry Sy; Benpres Holdings Corp. and Al Ternate Holdings of tycoon John Gokongwei—to follow suit, the buyback boosted bottom-line companies.

Ayala closed higher by 1.6 percent or ₱7.50 yesterday to ₱470 a share, maintained against the market's 13 point fall. Its 52-week high was ₱660 a share, data from the PSE showed.

Ayala's buyback program involves 1.5 percent of its current market capital of ₱193 billion, it said in a disclosure to the stock exchange.

Ayala said the program would unfold upon the full usage of the allotment.

The buyback program aims to boost shareholder value whenever the stock is trading at a price discount as perceived by the company, which does not reflect its corporate value based on the stock prices of the individual units making up the holding company Ayala said.

Ayala added that the program likewise provided the opportunity to repurchase shares when they were undervalued and would send a positive signal to investors of the company's confidence in its own shares.

Ayala also stressed that the program would not affect any of the company's prospective and existing projects and investments, including its ongoing liabilities management program.

"We think the program should be fulfilled as it reflects the confidence of management on its own stock price amid market's volatility," JP Morgan said in a study.

ATR Kim Eng also agreed that the buyback program would send a positive signal to investors.

"The buyback program will have a small impact on net asset value and earnings. In our opinion Ayala directors are sending a signal that the stock is undervalued at current levels," ATR Kim Eng said.

'Show of confidence in its own stock'

Stocks close lower ahead of Estrada verdict

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 8.4 PERcent lower yesterday due to concerns over possible unrest stemming from the impending verdict of deposed President Joseph Estrada, dealers said.

They said continuing concerns over the shaky outlook for the US economy also weighed down on the market.

The composite index ended down 13.11 points at 3,207.93 on volume of 2.9 billion shares worth ₱1.7 billion.

There were 83 decliners and 38 advancers, while 51 stocks were flat.

This was its worst finish in two weeks but it was still off the day's low of 3,203.08. The all-share index fell 13.93 points, or 0.6 percent, to 2,067.86.

"The political tension is causing some nervousness, and uniformly we also have to contend with external concerns," said Jose Vitug of SB Capital Securities Inc.

The Philippine military yesterday went on high alert to thwart violence that could explode when the court hands down its verdict on Estrada, who is facing charges of illegally amassing hundreds of millions of pesos from tax kickbacks and bribes from illegal gambling operators when he was still president.

Despite his ouster through a military-backed popular uprising in 2001, the former movie actor still enjoys the support of many poor Filipinos, while his successor Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo suffers from low popularity ratings.

AFP

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Lone North Harbor bid in the works

By Rica T. Chiravalle

RAPIDFOR CENTRE PORT TERMINALS Inc. and Metro Pacific Investment Corp. (MPIC) are preparing to submit next month their bid for the 25-year contract to operate the North Harbor.

Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) General Manager Oscar Gonzales said in an order issued that the Manila Regional Trial Court (RTC) has maintained its injunction against a second round of bidding for the terminal while the joint bidders and PPA submit written arguments.

"We have about a month to respond to each other's motions. Approximately. In the meantime, the bidding process for the Five initial is proceeding as ordered so we are working on our proposal," Romero said. He did not give more details.

According to the original schedule, the qualified bidders has to submit a proposal by Oct. 17, the same day it was to be opened.

Last week, Rickfrom Ltrader and MPIC received an injunction order from the Manila RTC Branch 21 ordering PPA to proceed with bidding process pending the resolution of their petition for mandamus against the second round. The injunction order also compelled the PPA to release the bid documents to Harbour Centre and MPIC so they can start working on their offer.

PPA said it could still file a motion before the Manila RTC to reconsider allowing the agency to award the contract through a competitive bid. PPA said its reason was to seek the concessionaire that could offer the lowest tariff rates, which was the reason it retained more than one bidder.

The PPA board has changed the terms of reference of the process to that the bidding can only proceed when there are at least two bidders. However, PPA added a provision of a negotiated bid as a contingency in case no other firm aside from Harbour Centre qualifies for the second round.

The 25-year concession for North Harbor covers the port's container terminal, general cargo terminal and passenger terminal complex, which will be considered as one operational area.

Terminal 1 will service all on-call off container and passenger vessels, terminal 2 will service container and passenger vessels, while terminal 3 will be allotted to conventional, non-containerized, bulk or breakbulk vessels and passenger vessels.

CA upholds lower court ruling on PRCI

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS JUSTIFIED the petition of the Malaysian-led directors of Philippine Racing Club Inc. (PRCI) seeking to stop the proceedings and nullify an adverse ruling of the Makati Regional Trial Court.

PRCI directors Izzuddeen Can Sr., former Defense Secretary Romeo ole Villa, Sebastian Ooi, Serdaga Can Jr. and Zaquard Seddin, through a petition for certiorari and prohibition, had earlier asked the CA to invalidate the lower court's temporary restraining order (TRO) stopping them from taking up the controversial purchase of JTH Davies Holding Corp. and the swap of the firm. Also unwittingly at a PRCI annual stockholders' meeting.

"This court finds no grave abuse of discretion in the issuance of the assailed restraining order," the CA said in its Sept. 6 2007 decision.

The Makati RTC is conducting hearings on a petition for injunction by a group of minority shareholders who have questioned the Can group's transactions. The shareholders alleged that they have been deprived by the Can group of access to documents and information regarding the disputed transactions.

They claimed that a planned swap of the firm Asia newsstack title with JTH Davies shares would cause losses to PRCI's primary business.

The Makati court had also issued a subpoena duces tecum ordering the Can group to produce documents pertaining to the questioned transactions. The Can group had likewise opposed this subpoena before the CA.

The CA Fifth Division junked the Can group's petition "for lack of merit, unconvincing and premature."

"Our only did the regional trial court properly exercise discretion in taking cognizance of the complaint for the minority shareholders, it is also merely performing its function as a commercial court when it scheduled the hearings on the complainant's application for injunction," the CA said.

The CA decision, in effect, paves the way for the commencement/continuation of the proceedings at the regional trial court.

ATI spends ₱180M for port project

ASIAN TERMINALS INC. (ATI) WILL TAKE delivery this month of three Metso cranes worth about P180 million to further ease congestion at the Manila South Harbor and equip it adequately to meet the rising demands of the country's growing economy.

ATI chair Brian Imhoff said, "We will keep upgrading our equipment and integrating IT-driven systems to make sure this improved trade gateway operates as efficient as quickly and efficiently as possible."

The new cranes can lift containers weighing up to 40.6 tons and reach three-five high. They are expected to accelerate container consolidation, much-needed cargo delivery operations as well as minimize yard utilization.

"This should result in improved truck turnaround time and higher productivity of cranes, calling at the port, and ultimately sustain the growth of ATI's volume-driven business, Imhoff said.

As of mid-August, container volumes at South Harbor reached 509,537 TEUs, which was 11 percent higher than the same period last year.

ATI projects enhanced and unflawed cargo traffic via the South Harbor as further increased once the long-term is a result of the concession's commitments.

Smith said the latest purchase of state-of-the-art container handling equipment was part of ATI's investment commitment to PPA for the South Harbor development.

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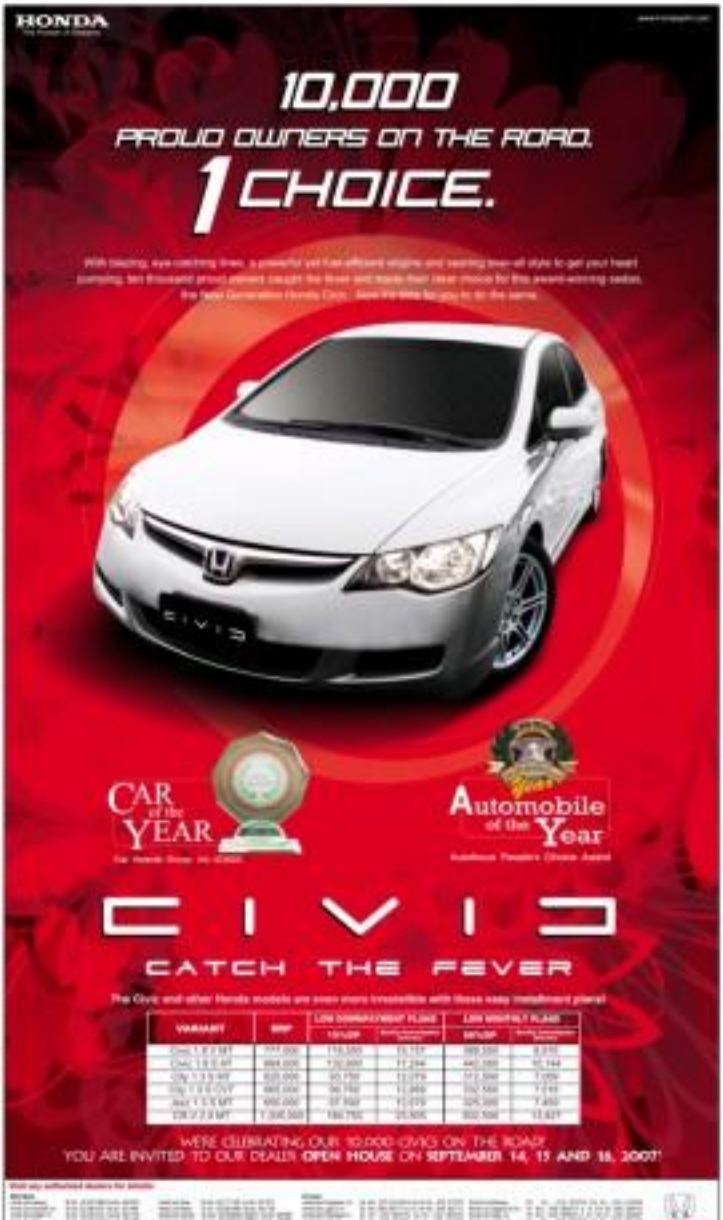

FMIC, UK bank tend to IFC float

WB arm set to issue P5B in bonds within the month

By Doris C. Dorisan

FIRST METRO INVESTMENT CORP. AND British bank Standard Chartered will arrange the peso-denominated bond offer of International Finance Corp. worth P5 billion set to be issued this month.

The World Bank's private sector lending arm will be the second triple-A-rated supranational issuer to float peso-denominated bonds after the Asian Development Bank, said Robert Antolin-Diaz, executive vice president of FMIC.

FMIC and Standard Chartered also handled the P5-billion ADB peso five-year bond float last May which carried a fixed rate of 5.25 percent per annum and were priced at a spread of 33 basis points over the rate calculated five-year Philippine Treasury bonds.

"It's almost similar to the ADB bond," Lopez said, noting that the IFC bond would also carry a five-year tenor. "It will be issued within September."

Domestic investors and regulators welcome the new domestic bond issuances by supranational institutions as these imply a level of confidence on the country's economic capital markets.

Also, there is a strong demand for AAA+ issued by triple A-rated institutions as indicated by the outcome of the ADB's inaugural float.

The ADB was supposed to issue only P2.5 billion last May, but it ended up doubling its offering size due to strong market appetite.

The ADB offering was oversubscribed by 1.4 times.

Since early 2006, the ADB has completed market-opening transactions in the region's local currency bond markets, including India, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China and Thailand.

The proceeds of this issue will be part of ADB's ordinary capital resources and will be used in its noncONCESSIONAL operations.

The IFC's plans to issue domestic bonds is expected to contribute to the development of the local capital market.

Liquidity in the local bond market has gotten impetus, allowing supranational issuers to price their bonds reasonably, following the government's ongoing bond exchange programs that are supposed to weed out dormant issues and replace them with more actively traded issues.

STRUNG AND DRIED
Strings of Vigan longganisa (native sausage) have been strung up and dried in Vigan City, Ilocos Sur. The longganisa, the city's top product, is being sold for P90 to P100 a dozen.

PNOC unit seeking help from private fund groups

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PNOC ALTERNATIVE FUELS Corp., a subsidiary of the Philippine National Oil Co., is seeking the help of private fund groups to bankroll its future jatropha oil-related projects.

PNOC-AFC president and chief executive Peter Anthony Abaya said the government-firm would submit proposals to financial institutions such as Standard Chartered, Citigroup, Barclays Capital, McQuarie Bank and United Coconut Planters Bank.

The Japan Bank for International Cooperation could also be tapped for funding support, he said.

"Our proposals to them should cover funding for plantations and refineries," Abaya said. "We'll also approach private-equity groups."

But the PNOC-AFC would continue to rely more on partnerships with private companies, rather than private lenders, to ensure the development and prosperity of jatropha-based biodiesel.

"We're now negotiating actively even to 10 foreign partners coming in, some just for plantations and some with refineries," Abaya said. "We hope to sign some agreements within this year."

The Land Bank of the Philippines has made available between P5 billion and P10 billion worth of funds for farmers and farming groups wanting to establish their own jatropha plantations and even their own refineries and other facilities.

Under the agreement, Land Bank would provide loans to qualified farmers or farmer groups wanting to venture into jatropha-related activities, including the establishment of plantations and refineries.

PNOC-AFC, on the other hand, will help identify prospective jatropha growers who can avail themselves of it.

It will also source into production, financing and marketing agreements with farmers, farm groups, cooperatives, small and medium enterprises, corporations and other qualified entities for jatropha biodiesel existing projects.

PNOC-AFC will also serve as the jatropha growers' seed buyer, to assure them of a steady and sure market for their harvests.

NIA told to account for ₱3.1-B irrigation budget

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY Arthur C. Yap had ordered the National Irrigation Administration to submit a report regarding the P3.1-billion budget for the rehabilitation and restoration of all irrigation systems nationwide.

Yap said that the Department of Agriculture has asked NIA Administrator Marciano Tagaon to make a status report which would be submitted immediately to Congress.

Yap issued the statement in connection to allegations made by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas that the DA had diverted the irrigation funds to continued purposes.

He likewise assured the public that the DA is focused on completing the repair of irrigation systems covering 55,000 hectares of rice fields in the country before December this year.

"The KMP has nothing to worry about regarding the irrigation repair because we'll finish the 55,000 hectares before December," Yap said.

The agriculture official also supposed to KMP that it should not focus on such technicality regarding of the NIA officials' any measures on pond.

"It's more noble and encouraging to the thousands in NIA, including the irrigator association partners of the agency who are doing their best to complete the task at hand," he said.

Yap has asked the farmers' group to join the DA in a proactive and positive partnership of identifying and monitoring the extent of repairs or changes that need to be made for the sector.

NIA administrator Tagaon earlier said that, as of August, the agency had restored irrigation to almost 20,384 hectares of rice fields out of the 55,000 hectares.

"NIA is allowed to subsidize because only 48 percent has yet to be completed as of August 31 from the original target of 37 percent," Tagaon said.

He added that NIA is willing to undergo any investigation before Congress or any body in the interest of transparency and accountability.

Yap said that it was "pretty surprising" that Rep. Satur Ocampo was quoted by KMP as the one who revealed the suspected fund diversion, adding that, in fact, the gentlemen of Bayan Muna have been fully backing the DA.

"During our budget deliberations last week, Rep. Crispin Beltran, Rep. Concepcion and Rep. Teddy Casiño were happy to hear that there is a return of focus to food security and not new housing," Yap said.

Yap added that new farmer Agriculture Secretary Rep. Salvador Escudero III supported the DA's investments in irrigation.

"When he was made the DA chief during Former Sen. Ed Ejercito's bail enumeration was the source of signed funds," Yap said. "Escudero was emphatic as well that the national rice progress be based of our irrigated lands."

Rep. Antie Cua even lamented that the amount of DA's budget is still lacking, Yap added. Amy R. Rosca

Agri culprit, victim of climate change

By Amy R. Rosca

THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IS both the culprit behind and victim of climate change—a phenomenon deemed as a major threat to world food security, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

According to Alexander Müller, FAO assistant director general, "agriculture is the sector most affected by changes in climate patterns and will be increasingly vulnerable in the future."

He said in a speech that especially at risk are developing countries, which are "highly dependent on agriculture and have fewer resources and options to combat damage from climate change."

Müller delivered the message to over 140 experts who recently convened in Rome for a workshop on "Adaptation Planning and Strategies."

The workshop was organized by the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, under the Helsinki work program on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Müller explained that in the short term, as the global average temperature rises 1-3 degree Celsius, industrialized countries may gain increased food production.

However, crop potential will most probably decline in lower latitudes even with a minimal rise in global temperature, he said.

"Overall, the risk to subsistence sectors, marginal, semi-arid and sub-humid tropical areas where rain-fed agriculture is the norm, is added.

In the Philippines, about 1.4 hectares planted to palay are rain-fed while some 2.6 hectares planted other to palay are irrigated.

There is an estimated 4.6 million hectares in the country.

Agriculture, however, is at the same time causing climate change.

It is estimated that the global livestock sector alone accounts for 18 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, while deforestation is responsible for 18 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, said the FAO.

According to the FAO, introducing improved livestock management and crop practices, coupled with adaptive management of forests, could help stem the rate of climate change.

Adopting land use practices such as conservation agriculture would also help maintain significant amounts of carbon in the soil, it added.

Rice production is another major source of greenhouse gas emissions.

"It is perhaps the main source of methane, with some 50 to 100 million metric tons per year emitted from the world's 150 million hectares of rice paddies," a FAO report said.

However, extreme weather conditions brought about by climate change can jeopardize rice crop production, which feeds more than half the world's population.

Using different and improved rice varieties with greater salinity tolerance could help prop up production and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

These varieties were successfully used by IRRI to curb the recovery of production in areas damaged by the 2004 Asian tsunami.

FAO added that the rapid transition toward greater use of biofuels could also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, for so long as food security and environmental considerations are taken into account.

"Climate change is emerging as one of the main challenges humankind will have to face for many years to come. It could become a major threat to world food security as it has a strong impact on food production, access and distribution," Müller said.

Joma Sison unmasked

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES
Horacio C. Gonzal

JOSE MARIA SISON ORGANIZED the Communist Party of the Philippines along Maoist lines.

Sison believed that, if he can isolate the countryside, the cities would fall like overripe fruit, as what happened in China.

Funded by communist groups abroad, Sison organized the New People's Army (NPA) under the command of Dante Buscayno.

From the organized communist cells in the cities, he later boasted that the NPA was already spread over 300 guerrilla fronts, and party membership had swelled to 1 million all over the archipelago.

Marcos jailed Sison for rebellion. But, Cory Aquino, in the worst decision of her presidency, released Sison and allowed him to go to Holland where he joined his wife and was granted political asylum.

From Holland, Sison regularly sent his opinions on what was going on in the Philippines. While the NPA struggled in the mountains, and the front organizations mounted protest rallies in city streets, Sison rambled on from the safety of his comfortably ensconced life in Holland.

Even when the Communist world had collapsed around him, Sison bragged that he had the secret formula (without giving any details) for healing the master-to-pawn-ship.

Today, except for its occasional raid on an isolated ARMM outpost, or an ambush of an Army patrol, the job of the NPA is now transferred to enlivening the 10 percent revolutionary tax on everything that moves and grows in the for distance barrios.

The tax is also applied on public school teachers' salaries and sari-sari store sales. If the price is just too much above it, the NPA takes it life-out of church collections.

The NPA has demonstrated itself to be an extortionist gang preying on the poorest of the poor to further fleecing them.

But after all these years, the famed Sison can go to say now that the NPA claims it controls land some of the cities have fallen. The Maoist-Sison strategy is a complete failure in the Philippines.

The AFP can estimate the NPA's collective 7000 soldiers a year. That is probably an exaggeration. But the real figure still makes the Communist party the richest in the country.

Where does the money go? It surely does not stay in the barrios. There is nothing there to spend it on. The money ends up with front organizations in the cities to fund protest rallies, the media offensive, and finally the candidacies in the party-list system.

The US and the European Community have tagged the NPA and the Communist party as terrorist organizations. As a result, the flow of money across nations will soon reach trickle-size.

The front organizations in the cities have splintered. When the communist party-list representatives Satur Ocampo and Rep. Liza Maza were kicked out by the House of Representatives to avoid arrest, nobody came to storm the place in Mendiola there. The vaunted mass base had vanished.

The unrest of Sison is confined to the jungles. Even the counter-Sison bandits created a ripple among Filipino communists. There was a painfully small crowd of hardcore communists in front of the Death Anniversary in Makati that nobody noticed. The protestors have been silent. To Sison, the silence must be deafening.

Sison has been ostracized as a leader without followers, a chief with no Indians. The local communists have sent him a clear message: You are on your own, comrade.

Sison's biggest problem now is that he is caught in a criminal justice system that no amount of his money can buy.

Exports jumped 4.5% in July to $4.2B

From page B1

percent. For the first seven months, exports reached $28.73 billion, up 6.3 percent from a year ago. However, this was still off the government's exports growth target of 11 percent for the entire year.

"Given the weakness of the US economy, it is difficult to achieve the government's target. What is more realistic is a 6- or 7-percent exports growth for the year," said Mr. Abola, economics professor from the University of Santo Tomas and De La Salle.

The United States, whose economic slowdown has been projected following the huge defaults in housing loans payments in its subprime market, remained the Philippines' biggest export destination, accounting for 16.3 percent of the total export bill for July.

Earlier, the National Economic and Development Authority said the double-digit exports growth target for the year took into account the expected increase in global demand for consumer electronics.

"The Intels had said the projected slowdown in the US economy would not be much of a concern because the United States no longer accounted for bulk of Philippine exports.

"The share of the United States in Philippine exports is already shrinking, but is still significant," Abola said. The economist also said electronics exports would be higher this year, but the growth would only be single-digit.

Abola said the slowdown in the US economy was seen to last until the earlier months of 2008, and so Philippine exports were not likely to rise substantially in the remainder of the year to still achieve the double-digit growth targets.

Analysts said the strongest-than-expected peso was also a factor narrowing exports growth. The peso has been hovering in the 46-to-a-dollar territory stronger than the 48-to-50 assumed by the government when it set the economic targets for the year.

But while a double-digit growth may be unlikely, industry players said exports growth could be faster in the last quarter of the year. Chief demand comes from in the last few months of the year due to Christmas spending, they said.

The NSO said the Philippines' biggest export markets in July after electronics were apparel and clothing accessories ($240.97 million), petroleum products ($112.51 million), semiconductors and transistors ($89.7 million), automotive wiring sets ($84.41 million), metal components ($83.05 million), ores ($29 million), and bananas ($26.47 million).

The top exports markets after the United States were Japan ($1.03 billion), China ($499.83 million), Hong Kong ($372.47 million), Netherlands ($348.62 million), Singapore ($253.85 million), Malaysia ($230.84 million), Germany ($213.31 million), Taiwan ($171.59 million), and Korea ($137.24 million).

5 banks offer to fund gov't buyout of MRT

DOF hopes to secure $865-M loan by yearend

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE said that five banks have offered to lend the government the $865 million it needs to buy out line 3 of the Metro Rail Transit (MRT 3).

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the commercial banks' response to the government's financing need had bolstered chances that the buyout deal would be completed on Feb. 27, 2008 as scheduled.

Without disclosing names, Teves said the banks were majority owned by Filipinos but have foreign equity. The DOF is set to review the proposals of each bank and ink a financing deal before the end of the year, he added.

The government decided to buy out MRT 3 from the private consortium led by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., saying the move would help it save billions in annual subsidies allocated for its operations.

After buying it out, Teves said, the government intends to resell MRT 3 at terms more beneficial for the government. The government is not usually good in operating businesses, he admitted.

But before reaching up the search for possible buyers, Teves said, the government was at the moment focusing on raising funds and completing the buyout plan.

Connecting a loan at current market rates is seen to be cheaper for the government than continue subsidizing MRT 3, Teves said. Treasurer Leonardo Jose said that long-term borrowings are currently charged only a single-digit interest rate a year.

Under the build-operate-transfer contract between the government and the MRT 3 owners, the latter are given an assured rate of return on investment of 15 percent a year.

Due to low fare and high operation costs, however, MRT 3 has been losing heavily. Consequently, the government has been shelling out huge subsidies, amounting to P6.3 billion a year, to meet the 15-percent rate of return assured under the BOT contract.

Another Finance official commented that the obligation of remitting a 15-percent rate of return for the investor was burdensome for the government, especially since it is still in the process of reducing the budget deficit.

But the official added that the government could not have found an investor to place money for the vital mass transit project if it did not agree to the 15-percent rate of return.

The DOF proposes that the MRT 3 be allowed to raise fare to ease the bleeding. Increasing the fare, however, is not easy as this would be a highly unpopular move.

MRT 3 runs the length of Edsa from North Avenue in Quezon City to Taft Avenue in Pasay City.

The maximum fare for an MRT 3 ride is P15, much lower than the P40 air-conditioned bus conductor charges passengers traveling from North Avenue to Taft Avenue line, the official said.

PSBank
US Dollar
TIME DEPOSIT

	$1,000 to $9,999	$10,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $99,999	$100,000 and up
1 month	3.50%	3.50%	3.63%	3.75%
2 months	3.50%	3.63%	3.75%	3.88%
3 months	3.63%	3.75%	3.75%	3.88%
6 months	3.75%	3.88%	3.88%	4.00%
12 months	3.88%	4.00%	4.13%	4.25%

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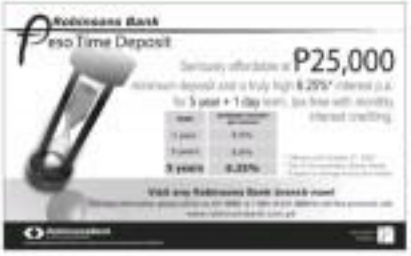

More Spanish firms eye presence in RP

By Bernie W. Damings

MORE SPANISH FIRMS ARE COMING during plans to set up operations in the country due to the strong economic growth rates in the past two quarters, according to the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in Manila.

La Caixa's president Jose Luis Romero-Salas said in a briefing yesterday that there are strong signs that Spanish companies have renewed their interest to the country.

"Spanish firms are now looking beyond the politics in the country," Romero-Salas said. "They are seeing the Philippine economy stabilizing and posting real growth."

La Caixa has 106 member companies, which are engaged in businesses like insurance, cosmetics, textiles and wine distribution.

Asked whether issues like Comelec President Fortunato Abante's plunder case were a concern among Spanish businessmen, he said these have no impact on their business decisions. "We are focused on opportunities," he said.

He cited the 7.3-percent growth posted in the second quarter, which was a 20-year high for the country and which was topped only by Singapore and China in the region.

Romero-Salas said that unless such economic setting, the Instituto de Promocion Exterior de Castilla La Mancha (Ipex) was bringing in through a trade show five companies that were looking at establishing businesses in the country.

The five firms that would be introduced through the 6th Spanish Products and Services Expo or expoapapa—to be held Sept. 26-30—were dive manufacturer Cabrales Water and wine producers Bodegas Latue-Cooperativa San Isidro, Bodegas Nuestro Lugar, Junta del Pozuelo-Bodegas Pantero and Sandoval.

Romero-Salas said Spain was looking to turn around its trade relations with the Philippines that have lagged behind most of the country's leading trade partners.

He said the Philippines enjoyed a trade surplus in 2006, exporting to Spain $113 million worth of goods and importing $128 million.

"Wine remains the biggest export of Spain to the Philippines and we do not see that changing over the next few years," he said. "Spain is also looking at converting its presence in the fashion industry."

Romero-Salas said future opportunities for partnerships between Spanish and local firms abound in food products, biofuels and infrastructure.

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Today's financial markets have seen the proliferation of financial assets which are exposed to increasing risks due to interest rate volatility, foreign exchange fluctuations, and changes in other market variables. The challenge for financial practitioners is to measure and manage these risks using financial and quantitative tools. This two-day seminar discusses the common tools for risk measurement and management.

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Module 1
•Quantifying financial risk
•Value-at-risk methods
•Financial derivatives

Saturday, October 20
Module 2
•Financial derivatives
•Use of derivatives in risk management

Vehicle sales up 15.8% as of August

VEHICLE SALES AS OF AUGUST went up 15.8 percent, with nonpassenger saying that a 15-year high growth this year is becoming more certain.

Elizabeth H. Lee, president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (Camap), said in a joint report with the Truck Manufacturers Association that they sold a total of 75,040 units as of end-August from 65,545 last year.

Lee said the industry expected sales to average at 8,600 units a month for the rest of the year.

"Once (that is) achieved, the industry would have the highest sales in the past 10 years by surpassing the 100,000 mark," she added.

Lee said Campi and TMA expected to continue their overall growth in the coming months considering the current "stable economic environment."

"The continuous efforts of the government against smuggling would also help support sales from the formal auto sector," she said.

"Although the industry experienced its highest growth in the past 10 years, the load auto sector will have a long way to go compared to its Southeast Asian neighbors," Lee said.

Sales of commercial vehicles grew 23.2 percent in the eight-month period while that of passenger cars grew 9.2 percent, according to Campi and TMA data.

The CV segment, which includes the subsegments of Asian utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, light trucks, and trucks and buses, accounted for 66 percent of aggregate sales.

All four subsegments showed improvements with sales of AUVs going up 26.8 percent to 26,199 units and of light commercial vehicles—consisting of pickups, vans, compact sports utility vehicles—by 20.3 percent to 21,830 units.

The assemblers also sold 1,300 units of light trucks or 26.3 percent higher, while buses took 9.08 percent of trucks and buses or 35.6 percent better than last year.

On the other hand, turnover of passenger cars increased to 23,870 units although sales declined by 5.4 percent between August and July.

In terms of total sales, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. kept the lead with 38.8 percent of the market, followed by Honda Cars Philippines Inc. and Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp.

Bernie W. Damings

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MOTORING

Edited by Emma O. Manigsaca

ClearVue
Silicone Coated Blade
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Who's your mechanic?

By Tess R. Sarao

PATRICK DAVAO, 20 YEARS old, sells apples, grapes, oranges, bananas and rambutan at Divisoria from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays. That's his day job.

But from 7 p.m. to 12 midnight Mondays to Saturdays, he would be holding wrenches, screwdrivers, pliers or special tools designed to service specific engines or components such as check, timchen, overspring screwdriver.

That's right. Patrick has two occupations—fruit vendor by day and student automechanic by night. And we can't tell which moonlighting is more lucrative.

The Toyota dealership in Cubao has taken on Patrick for an on-the-job training stint. There, his schedule was altered a bit: mechanics from Mondays to Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (including over time) and fruit vendor on Sundays.

It was to Technical College of Science and Technology (or Quiapo, Manila where buyers blooming dressed upon Patrick making on a Toyota EFI engine simulator and found out about his double identity. But why all the trouble for one who, we said? Patrick answers earnestly, this was all for his four other siblings.

There's more of Patrick's kind. He is just one of Toyota Foundation's thousand or so scholars. He first passed the screening at the Dominion College. Another screening exam and final interview was also conducted by Toyota Motors Philippines Foundation.

Gumaca is one of the 14 partner schools of Toyota Motors Philippines Foundation's scholarship program. These partner schools, in a way, have become a "buffer" for car dealers in the country to make sure the "brain drain" among mechanics would not likely happen.

On the lookout

Since 1998, the Foundation has been on the lookout for poor but deserving student-automechanics. Louis Ferrante, project administrator, describes what values they are searching for among scholars: "Idealism, honesty, resourcefulness, a hard-working, intelligent, industrious, reliable and selfless."

And every year, for 17 years, Toyota Foundation has been scouring 101 such schools to fill the Toyota dealer network that has increased to 26 workshops nationwide. Demand is increasing because the workshops continue to grow yearly.

'Perfect match'

The world's No. 1 automaker "rummages" around its school partners all around the country to find the "perfect human match" in its engines.

About P4 million are spent for scholars every year, and another P1.25 million a year is donated about five EFI engine simulators to the partner schools (P250,000 per simulator). The simulator plant is devoted a common rail direct injection engine simulator is planned to be donated by 2008.

"The common rail (engine) is more advanced, but the conventional is logical. If you're very good in EFI, it would be easy to get into the CRDI," says Vitaliano Jubilo Diamond, EFI lab coordinator service operations.

CRDI is the new generation diesel engine for improved power and fuel efficiency. It is equivalent to gasoline engine EFI system.

What scholars get

Aside from the tuition, the Foundation pays for the scholars' book allowances, salary savings at P2,500 and a monthly stipend of P3,000 for non-NCR-based scholars and P1,400 for a Luzon-based scholar. A scholar based in Visayas or Mindanao gets a P1,200 monthly stipend.

A graduating scholar may also get the chance to be sent to Toyota's Japan headquarters for further two-year studies.

A scholar is also entitled to undergo OJT

PATRICK, who is before top with Quiapo's EFI simulator, might also be trained to use "scanfiguret tester" computer system to quickly diagnose problems.

TO 'REPLENISH' technician continually being pirated for overseas jobs, the Toyota Foundation scholarship program is helping the PATRICK, Jessie and Ellen.

To avert the 'brain drain' of auto mechanics, world's No. 1 automaker 'rummages' around auto schools to 'tune up' promising talents

Crystal Ball 101

SOMAN BOND HAVE THIS FASCination with trying to predict the future. If you really think about it, when you bump together all the professions that deal with trying to prepare people for what's going to happen tomorrow, figuring a billion-dollar industry is easy. Weathermen, stock analysts, astrologers, tarantula and TV evangelists preaching apocalypse are just some of the people making big bucks in the global business industry.

It's strange that people think making big bucks can predict the future too. If I had a penny every time someone asked me what new car is going to break out and when, I wouldn't have to answer car purchases anymore. The idea of walking into a dealership with a dump truck's load of one peso coins may sound ludicrous, but hey, cash is cash.

Seriously though, when consumers ask me what new cars are going to come out I have to use words like "probably" or "likely" too. While those who write about the automotive industry do have an idea of what is on the launch horizon, other details are sketchy at best. Often speculations only become public knowledge during the media launches. Even points followed much later in some cases.

What's on the grapevine?

When motoring hacks meet outside the world of work, it's funny that we have to gossip about new product launches. Having to get information from one's colleagues is essential in trying to keep updated in this industry. While this grapevine is critical, often hard-and-fast info isn't set in stone by launching the launch. The paid PR and the hyper-fueled talk is when the skill lies.

I hate to admit this, but most motoring journalists become aware of

MY DRIFT

Andre Dabao

launching products through nuances that are readily available to the public. Gift through the cues of push-on-but-lie-corner. Read reviews from other markets. Keep tabs on the regional advisories. Temper all this loose information with a little experience and you've got the basics of Automotive Crystal Ball 101 down pat. In the same way you look for risqué celebrity pictures online, you have to be able to tell the real deal from a Photoshop job. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

Lack of information

It is funny that we have to do all this research at all. Not knowing what cars are coming out is rife in larger automotive markets, launch dates and product information are available to the public months a year in advance. In the Philippines, how many automakers have become victims because of the lack of information? I for one am on that list. Back in 1998, in the middle of swapping a 4.6A into my local market SR, the SSR came out. Cue two sleepless nights at a ground Civic, knowing what you wished to build can be brought brand-new from the showroom?

The reasons behind the tight lips are obvious. Market size is the main culprit. As small as our automotive industry is, the smallest hiccups can affect business. Imagine the dip in sales if consumers had hard information that an auto dog a newer version of what they are planning on purchasing would come out. The stockpiles of Rx. firms would be overflowing with unsold, previously traded cars that would have to be disposed of in a fire sale. That would be great for economists but be just-cited if you're an emphatic for any vehicle manufacturer.

Case in point is the chance meeting I had with an industry big shot late last week at a family event. After the usual gripes about my abusive Fonz, his friend's current, cold this Xmas exercise made me promise to go to the next one in November. Having been placed in a spot I wanted to crunch the facts and asked, "So what's launching in November?" No just smiled that signature 1,000,000 grin and took a drag from his cigarette, thinking he got the last laugh on me. Fans can play that game. It's were in the market for a new vehicle I'll wait until November before I bought from his brand. So should you.

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

By Emmie Cora

So, who drives what? The car of the rich and the famous

Steve Jobs

Just wonder what car does Steve Jobs drive along the Silicon Valley? Asian blog CLSAlley-mag.com, neighbors of the Apple tycoon-spotted him driving a silver Mercedes CL600 early this year. Snobist made Jobs, also the founder of Pixar Animated Studios, settle for the CL600?

The model was launched by Mercedes late in 2000 presenting it their most sophisticated car ever. This has an impressive combination of power, comfort, handling and style, says CarSafe.com. It belongs to the generation of the CL-Class, or C215, which is currently available in other models: CL600, CL55 AMG and CL65 AMG.

Larry Page

Google founder and financial wizard the world's billionaires, 34-year-old Larry Page reportedly drives a Toyota Prius, one among his undoubtedly long list of gas-guzzling collection of sports car, according to celebrity.com.

Page is currently the president of Products of Google Inc. with a net worth pegged at US$19.5 billion. Forbes listed him the 26th richest (living) person in the world together with Sergey Brin.

Peter Thiel

The co-founder and former CEO of PayPal was once spotted driving his McLaren sports car. The 40-year-old prominent financier was probably lured by the fascinating sports car considered one of the top of the line Mercedes Benz models ever released.

Reference: http://celebrity-mag.com/tech/trivia/cars-of-the-rich-and-famous-282082.php; www.google.com; www.CarSafe.com

BMW Group cited for best performance both in fuel economy, carbon emissions

THE BMW GROUP ANNOUNCED that a compelling new Environmental Defense report shows that the manufacturer's automobiles have improved average fuel economy by 16 percent and dramatically reduced CO2 emissions rate by 12.3 percent—more than any other major automaker. The most best reduction of any other automaker was 3 percent.

The report praises the BMW Group's achievements and notes that BMW did not sacrifice sales growth while improving its fleet's fuel economy and carbon emission rates. In fact, during the study's period of analysis (1990-2006), the BMW Group expand a more than fourfold increase in US sales.

In its report, 'Automakers' Corporate Carbon Burdens,' Environmental Defense, a leading national nonprofit environmental protection organization comprised of more than 500,000 members, studied the impact of 12 major automakers' product strategies on fuel efficiency and the overall level of automotive carbon emissions.

The report found that the BMW Group led only lead the automotive industry in both fuel economy of its vehicles and the reduction of carbon emissions, but that the BMW Group was one of only two automakers in the study that reduced its per-vehicle CO_2 emission rates.

Commitment to environment

The report's findings underscore the BMW Group's commitment to the environment, sustainability and EfficientDynamics. With BMW EfficientDynamics, the BMW Group strives to enhance fuel economy with every new product while still offering the customer the best in class performance. To do so, the BMW Group works tirelessly to develop and use innovative technology to reduce fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions while simultaneously enhancing a vehicle's dynamic performance.

According to Yuji Sahaya, vice president of Engineering for BMW of North America, "Independent confirmation of BMW's leading position in fuel economy and emissions for all—while delivering exciting performance—corroborates BMW's strategy to optimize its vehicles through technology and combine the ultimate driving experience."

Ongoing quest

As indicated in the report, the BMW Group improved fuel economy on a number of its key models, including the BMW 3 Series, 5 Series, 7 Series, M coupé, M roller and X5 4.8i.

Additionally, the BMW Group's Mini Cooper accounted for almost half of BMW's overall fuel economy improvement.

Since the conclusion of the Environmental Defense's research for this report, the BMW Group has announced a number of additional advancements, initiatives and milestones in its ongoing quest for sustainable mobility. The introduction of the BMW Hydrogen 7—the first hydrogen powered luxury sedan.

The BMW Hydrogen 7 is not a concept car. It is reproduction model vehicle that has successfully completed the entire BMW product development process. Running in hydrogen mode, the BMW Hydrogen 7 has extremely low emissions and emits primarily water vapor, representing another major step in reducing CO_2 emissions.

Who's your mechanic?

From page B2-1

(on-the-job training). While three years a good auto mechanic scholar could move up from being a basic technician to a master Toyota technician.

Hammond said that although some trained scholars still get pirated abroad, more young people are being drawn to the call of the engine, just like Patrick who told the Inquirer in Filipino: "I really love to tinker with engines. The demand for mechanics does not diminish as we see more vehicles on the road."

Screening of scholars

To show how serious the screening of these scholars are, Thelma Espinosa, officer in charge of TSEP Foundation's education sector, said that aside from the usual final interviews from the procedural rumpus scholars, Toyota Motors Philippines Foundation conducts home visits that would sometimes take down inside narrow alleys in towns and cities.

Ernie Cuna, 22, another Foundation scholar, is a contractual employee of Toyota Otis. Ernie runs a Maldoon errand or identity-deserving another auto-the-thanic working on a car when he decided to study and become one himself. He told Inquirer Motoring that his father, at the time, was a plant supervisor of sandbuilings.

Cuna once competed in the finals area skill Olympics youth category and won in the Manila district. Cuna now helps support his parents and five siblings who live in Bacaquiran.

Sonny Castrence, a contractual employee at Toyota Quezon Avenue, used to work as a service crew in a Shaltoc technician while studying at Centro as a Toyota scholar. His interest and background in cars was nothing new. He used to work the his uncle's auto shop with no salary welfare, indeed.

Reacquaintance with a BMW Seven

From page B2-1

framed by the reassurance that the driver is parked inside the latest safety features. Active Front eight airbags, disc brakes on all four 17-inch light alloy wheels and Xenon headlights as standard equipment. On 750Li has Dynamic Stability Control which includes ABS anti-lock brake system, ASC Automatic Stability Control, DSC Dynamic Brake Control and DBC Dynamic Brake Control—all together ensuring superior driving stability and traction.

The Drive

Sit before driving a Seven, you need an orientation course because of the complicated and confusing iDrive control system. I remember that at the world premiere of the 7 Series in leafy BMW staff from Germany had a hard time explaining to unnerving journalists from all over the world how to use the eight-inch iDrive Controller intuitively. BMW is still evening the iDrive system to make it easier to use. Good luck!

Meanwhile, the leather-clad interior of the 750Li remains as plush, roomy and comfy as ever with welcome cues replacing the dash wood of previous models. The long wheelbase allows rear-seat occupants, overcoat aces, to stretch their legs in comfort. The 7 Series, after all, is supposed to be chauffeur-driven while you relax in the back. But since driving the nimble, powerful 750Li is such a pleasurable experience, you are forgiven if you occasionally take over the wheel.

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Altruism is a nonprofit organization.

TOYOTA
Moving forward

An inventor's wait for vindication

By Charlie S. Baker

HIS INVENTION MAY BE considered too good to be true and even not worth trying for the damage it might cause to the vehicle over time.

However, Marianito Rabe is imploring us to dismiss his Fuhrman Fuel Booster too quickly.

"I know the market is already swamped with so many gas saving products. Understandably so many of them who bought them were not satisfied. As a result, new products that could show promise are already downgraded quickly," lamented the 58 year-old long time member of the Filipino Inventors Society.

So how does Rabemar Fuel Booster works?

Installed on the fuel line

Rabe explained that his 6.35-cm long cylindrical canals of stainless steel and bronze Rotogal device is installed on the fuel line, right before the injectors. Pitched both ends of the device reconnects the fuel line, one end has two more connectors for the hot water to come in and out.

"So the hot water goes in and out of the device, it heats up the gasoline that passes through and effectively boosting the gasoline's combustion efficiency even before reaching the fuel injectors," he said.

"But the most important is that the device is less likely to damage the engine as it does not affect the air/fuel ratio, has no connection to the intake manifold and since it has no moving parts, it does not require cleaning or parts replacement," he assured of his device that sells at P5,000 a piece (although Rabe is still looking for marketers, he could be reached at 09193-6369980).

Rabe contended that his current unit could be installed to most car models as long as they are gasoline engine equipped with fuel injection (will not work on motorcycles).

Convince car owners

"Since I cannot afford the P8,500 assessment fee that the Industrial Technology Development Institute of the Department of Science and Technology requires me to pay in order to verify my device, I decided to just convince some car owners and through them find out if my invention works or not," he related.

Rabe said he just basing from the weekly gasoline expenses of those car owners, he was able to get weekly fuel expenses savings that range from 15 percent to even 20 percent (especially those who frequently drive on the highways).

"I would be more happy if a more scientific testing is done (as well as the needed financial support) to make the test possible," he said lamenting on the lack of support he got from the authorities.

Credibility problems

Rabe added that because several gas saving products have already been proven ineffective or were just a hoax, newly introduced products such as his Fuhrman Fuel Booster are already suffering from credibility problems.

"I even offered our government official to try my device for free but declined. I'm not losing hope. I believe my invention, which took me two years to perfect, should be given a chance," he said.

Although the native of Sta. Cruz, Bauang, Ilocos Sur has no formal training as a scientist or an engineer, Rabe said he has always been interested in mechanics.

"But like me, a lot of inventors have no formal training along this line of their invention. However, this should not stop us from achieving our goals. The public as well as the authorities should not just dismiss us so easily. Otherwise, it would be very sad if one day somebody from abroad would contact one of us and give us all the necessary support and exposure that we haven't enjoyed here," he said.

RABEMAR'S device installed in a Honda Civic

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MOTORING

BMW 730Li grand touring in a sporty style

THE BMW 730Li's 258-hp straight-six engine

Reacquaintance with a BMW Seven

SIX YEARS IS A LONG ENOUGH INTERVAL for getting reacquainted with one of the world's finest large luxury cars. I last drove a BMW Seven in October 2001 at Poggio, Italy where the Munich-based car manufacturer held the world premiere of the eight-cylinder 735i and 745i, the fourth generation of the 7 Series rode started the E65.

When it was launched on the market as the 2002 model, the E65 turned off many BMW fans because of its starkly angular appearance and radically designed tail, a much cry from most cars' calls for styling done! Chris Bangle's inspiration. Consequently, in the spring of 2005, the 735i and 745i were replaced by the 740i and 750i for the 2006 model year with new power units and a subtly re-designed rear. What had looked like marked cutbacks over the headlamps were removed. The complicated iDrive control system was also revised to simplify the menus and provide more direct access to certain functions.

ON THE ROAD

Ande Sorilla-Mendoza

Aside from the 5L 750Li and the 12-cylinder 760Li, BMW Philippines Corp. offers the customers rear diesel 730Ld and the 07,600,000-priced 730Li. It was with the latter that I got acquainted with one weekend last month.

Grand touring

The initials "Li" stand for long wheelbase and since the 7 Series cars are essentially grand touring saloons, it makes sense for BMW Philippines to offer only the long wheelbase versions. Notwithstanding its entry-level rep the 7 Series's rocking, the 730Li can hang almost its light-footed agility and upgraded engine power.

The 730Li is still a lightweight at 1,695 kilos. Its 3.0-liter inline-6 gasoline engine has a composite magnesium/aluminum crankcase. Weighing 140 kilos, it is the lightest six-cylinder in the world in its performance segment. Moreover, the 730Li, like its brothers in the 7 Series sector, has an all-aluminum chassis and suspension. All these translate into a 12 percent increase in engine output for the 730Li while simultaneously achieving greater fuel efficiency. Fuel consumption averages (Euro 4) 8.6 liters per 100 kilometers combined city and highway driving, reflecting a 4.7 percent improvement over the previous 730i.

With a fully variable Valvetronic valve drive first introduced in the BMW 650i and a six-speed automatic transmission with Steptronic, the 730Li is capable of 258 bhp @ 6,000 rpm and max torque of 300 Nm @ 2,500-4,000 rpm. It accelerates from zero to 100 kilometers per hour in 7.9 seconds and has a top speed of 246 kph, according to BMW Philippines.

Smooth Six

No matter at what speed you drive the 730Li, the massive is infinitely smooth. Credit this to BMW's 71-year track record in the construction of straight-six power units. BMW has always preferred the inline-6 over the V8 configuration because it delivers the optimum refinement expected of a luxury badge like the Bimmer.

No description of a BMW Seven would be complete without something about the supreme riding comfort it offers. Not only does the standard aluminum-suspension rolls under track, stop-dive and turn-squat (in the cars' parlance) steering precision, agility and balanced behavior, it also provides supreme ride quality worthy of a grand touring saloon which the 730Li is. Once you board a Seven, you will be tempted to motor straight away to Baguio or to further destinations to-come dining/sitting this on a such a smooth, quiet-as-a-comfortable experience.

The driving pleasure is further en-

THE BMW 730Li's complete cockpit

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Sports hangover

We had so much fun working on the launch of 2bU! Sports last week that we were all hit with a sports hangover. This week we give you the 411 on Kobe Bryant's Supernatural visit to Manila, an explosive radio face-off between the Blue Eagles and the Green Archers, and a big spread on the pep squads of the UAAP who will be competing this weekend

Smells like school spirit

The UAAP cheerdance competition is on at the Araneta Coliseum this Sunday!

By Ruth L. Navarra and Patrick Leonard M. Mayo,
2bU Contributors

THE END OF THE ELIMINATION round for the University Athletic Association of the Philippines basketball means only one thing: the cheerdance competition is on.

All eight school members will meet head to head in the Araneta Coliseum this Sunday to vie for the title. The only upside we can say about this year's event is that major sponsor Samsung does not expect teams to come up with a humming choir, hahahaah.

If half-time cheerdances are a preview of what to expect, then the competition this weekend will be interesting and surprising.

We've seen the Far Eastern University Cheering Squad teaming up with the University of the Philippines Pep Squad during half-time, when their teams faced each other for the first time. We've heard the Adamson University Pep Squad beating the familiar chants of all the schools, including Ateneo Blue Babble Battalion, De La Salle University Cheering Squad and the University of Santo Tomas Yellow Jackets, to the delight of the crowd last Sunday.

High morale

The cheering squads are responsible for a lot of things. They are responsible for keeping the morale high even when their team is burdened with a 20-point deficit. They keep their community from becoming too rowdy. They lead their schoolmates in singing the school hymns.

Most importantly, they give their schools reason to be proud.

Even when they look like they're having a lot of fun during the half-time period, the teams invest a lot of hard work on their pyramids, basket tosses and tumbling passes.

Most teams practice three to four hours every single day during the basketball season. The training hours get even longer a month before the competition.

The members also have to offset their workouts to polishing their routines. Yet, they still have to find a way to study for the midterms. They are always students first, cheerleaders second.

Sprains, ACLs, fractures? They shrug it off. They know the risks involved in the stunts they do.

(PLEASE C)

FEU Cheering Squad

Coach: Jacqueline Alcaraz
Captain: Chenzie Cardos
Members: 16 girls, 17 boys
Title held: 1998 champion
Place last year: Second place
Message to their supporters: We ask that you pray and support us this Sunday because we will do everything to make you proud!
Message to their opponents: We will see them on the 10th and goodluck to them!
The members:

Last year's runner-up only wants one thing this year: their title! It's been eight years since the squad last hoisted the championship trophy, and its members are aiming to get the title back for Morayta.

They were pleasantly surprised to find contenders from high school and college students even Montessori are familiar with their moves and are able to perform them, too. This team has proven that they are worthy of admiration and emulation from all over the country. They never run out of ideas and there's always something to watch out for from the Tamaraws!

LET'S go Tamaraws!

NO HOME runner-ups, they're ready to be champs again

UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe

P1L1 may pull off another championship do-over!

Choreographer: Ryan Silva
Captain: Jean Margarita Sulit-Jose
Members: 91 girls, 14 boys
Titles held: 1998-1999, 2002-2006 champions
Message to their supporters: Thanks for the all-out support during ball games and our concerts. Please also support the Tiger cubs!
Message to their opponents: Let's enjoy the competition and show our talents with this crowd.

DIGNITY relies and counting!

The members:

For their dominance through 12 years and counting as the defending champs, the Salinggawi Dance Troupe remains the team to beat in the year's cheerdance competition. The group keeps their routines a secret by practicing inside the UST anniversary gym. In this exclusive place, the only people privy to their routine

Smells like school spi

Some senior are lucky to get support from their fellow students and school administrators, while some have to wait for hours for their turn in the gym. Some have drawings in place to take care of their practices, while others have to come with us.

So they go on. Minor injury is not enough reason to stop a dance from performing. Last year, some members of the University of the East Cheering Squad competed while in casts.

It only goes to show that when school pride is at stake, the only way to do one's job is with passion. Perhaps, if we dissect the hearts of these warriors, we would find school colors inside.

Grade secrecy

Most senior cheer dirt spots desire as soon as they leave competitions. Some even advertise while performing to keep their routines secret up until the very last minute. The secretive measures they take are unbelievable.

"Why the secrecy for a cheerdance competition?" Some say they've had experiences in which their routines were ripped off by other teams. In the competitions, originality is everything.

But school competition gets ugly between schools, it takes a squad like the National University Pep Squad to remind everyone why cheering is all about.

UP Pep Squad

Coach: Lalaine Peralta
Captains: Pio Quimbo and Andrea Gonzalez
Titles held: 1999-2001 champion
Place last year: Third place
Message to their supporters: We need to show our supporters a routine that should be to hold my dudes on to who the winner should be.
Message to their opponents: What you prepared for the day (something that you want or need). God will give what you prepared for. So we've been prepared and are still preparing.
The members:

After holding the cheerdance title for three consecutive years from 1999-2001, The Oblation cheerdance squad is hungry for another crack at glory. And they are not putting their recent absence on themselves this year, even flinging their co-captain Andrea Gonzalez. Sure, they want to win, but they want to have fun as well.

UE Cheering Squad

Choreographer: Mike Cabral
Captain: Stephanie Bella Cruz
Members: 16 girls, 14 boys
Message to their supporters: I hope you guys support us because we've been cheering and representing Blue behind the whole year.
Message to the opponents: Good luck to all of you and you will see the best of UE.
The members:

With barely a week before the competi

OUT to leave the competition

Adamson Pep Squad

NU Pep Squad

Ateneo Blue Babble Battalion

rit

From page C1

Always sweet, never moody. Sossy pero madaling ma-reach.
Hard to get. Pero sakto ang cute.
Kahit araw-araw kasama hindi nakakasawa. Pwedeng iuwi kay mommy.
Masarap kapiling pagpasing sa umaga.
At kahit mag-break masarap pa rin.
Mamahalin Mo

DLSU Cheering Squad

Coach: Ramon Pagsuyoin III
Previous and recent: Andre Santos, Jesse Santos, Andrew Manuelian
Members: 12 girls and 15 boys
The heroes:
After being sidelined last year's cheerdance competition, the DLSU Pep Squad is determined to send a loud message that they're back, despite the many challenges they're facing as they head into this year's competition. Just last week, nine of their members suffered a bad fall during practice, relegating her to the sidelines. The lineup is now mainly composed of rookies.
Major changes are expected from the squad in this year's competition. They've been practicing chants with higher degrees of difficulty since July. And to add some color to the routine with their age-old nemesis from Katipunan, the boys of the DLSU Pep squad are also wearing romantic-hora dancing, but still with lines of the basic

READY to take the **spotlights**

Ateneo Blue Babble Battalion

Previous C3

head into the last three of this year's cheerdance competition, something that has proven elusive to the squad from Katipunan. Members of the squad who are competing in this year's tournament had to undergo rigorous and rigid screenings in order to find the best fit for their competition routine.
Pyramids and high flying moves on the ante sail the expected of the squad this year. The boys who were traditionally known for their seemingly stationary movements are also taking a step forward as they will try to bust new dance moves. But their primary goal is to execute their routine to perfection, and thus entertain the crowd and win the crown.

EYES on a higher **prize this year**

Adamson Pep Squad

Previous C3

Current members of the squad and some of their alumni have joined forces to come up with the new routine they will unveil at the competition.
For the whole squad feasting into Sunday, the members have focused on improving their "hardcore" stunts like transitional pyramids and power moves. Like the "carousel" move that they pulled off last year, they promise their supporters and opponents alike something new come competition day.

THEY are to please the Recto crowd.

UE Cheering Squad

From page F1

now, the routine of the UE Cheering Squad is still incomplete. But they're not worried because they know they'll pull through on Sunday. Most of the routines come from the division themselves, since they don't have a choreographer in-public them. They do promise to bring something different to the arena this year.
The fate rests are out for blood, as others better take heed.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

The KOBE conundrum

By Adrian Dy
24/7 Correspondent

"Sino ang mga ilang dapat young partners ng Jews, hindi si Kobe. Also mahirap si Shaq (Shaq should have come here instead of Kobe, Shaq is secret)," someone whispered as we cruised the minutes until Kobe Bryant showed up for his Superweekend guest conference. It was a comment that was out of place or that incorrect, but not understood in the world of basketball-fueled and hoops hands.

Named after the famous Japanese beef, it seems as if Kobe has started his recovery from the start of his 2004 career. Selected 13th by the then-Charlotte Hornets, Bryant was the first guard drafted out of high school. He was also the first high-school guard to hold out, refusing to play for the team that selected him. Fifteen days after the draft, the Los Angeles Lakers offered the Hornets their starting center Vlade Divac in a trade of Bryant. The rest is history.

In those years in the mountains of the metric the Shaq comment, a group of 20-something guys were excited at a table, swapping stories of their favorite moments involving Bryant. They had the rotten luck of Glen Magnolia left upon to the basketball genius of Bryant. They also held up a huge poster of the Lakers. It was unlikely that Bryant would be doing superstar, but if he did, that was crude.

Criticized as a swellhead, the NBA superstar was however a disarming and charming presence in Manila

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Juno Clarion International Manila (Manila) Jaycees President, Louie Bonilla

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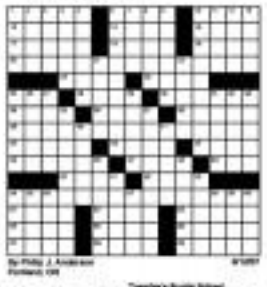

CONCEPTIS SU DOKO

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

		4	6	7				
	8				2			
7		3				1		
5		2				7		
8			3			9		
	9				6	2		
		7	1	5	3	6	4	
						5	2	9
							7	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKO

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs www.sudoku.com

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

Answers to previous puzzle

4	1	9	3	7	5	8	6	2
5	8	7	1	2	4	6	9	3
2	6	3	9	5	8	1	4	7
6	5	8	3	1	9	7	2	4
1	9	4	7	6	2	5	3	8
7	3	2	8	4	5	9	1	6
3	4	6	5	8	7	2	7	1
9	2	5	4	3	1	6	8	7
8	7	1	6	9	3	4	5	9

PUGAD BABOY

BY PAL JUNIOR

HAY, SALAMAT SA PAGLAMI!
WALA NAMAN 'YON!
HUWAG NA HUWAG MONG SASABIHIN SA KANILA NA NAGSISINUNGALING SILA

The Kobe conundrum

Front page A1

With Shaquille O'Neal as Bryant's partner on the latter's second year and ninth, Phil Jackson as head coach, the Lakers went for back-to-back-to-back NBA Championships from 2000-2002. Individually, Bryant's result also rose, garnering multiple All-Star nods, All-Defensive Team-mens, and all-NBA selections. Understandably, Bryant, in two years time, he would go through one of the most difficult periods of his life. On rape case against him.

'Mahalaw'

Kobe Bryant: rock crossover-age or amidst? It is, two-letter life. Despite the misgivings and "we want Kobe!" cheers that broke out over and over while people waited, all the negative feelings disappeared the moment he took the stage, greeting us with the customary foreigner-on Philippine-soil greeting of "Mahalaw!"

Lest we forget, he was here to hawk his new line of shoes, telling us that he was constantly trying to "push the boundaries of product development, to push the game, to make shoes perform better, (and be) lighter, softer." When Bryant walks into a shoe meeting, he says that he just chooses one all sorts of ideas, and Nike always faithfully translates them into merchandise.

Four years ago, the superstar lost a gaggle of sponsors when he was charged with a sexual assault case. The rape investigation was merely the start of a tumultuous season punctuated by a slew of public clashes between him and Shaq, ending in the Lakers' ed. bigger in the NBA Finals to the hi-mit-Pistons.

The off-season that followed was even murkier. Depending on whom you believe, Bryant might or might not have forced management to choose between O'Neal and him. O'Neal was later shipped out east to the Miami Heat. Phil Jackson's contract was also not renewed. For better or for worse, the Lakers were now to be known as "Kobe's Team."

Charity event

Bryant came to the Philippines to "spread the love of the game to Filipino basketball players."

When discussing his charity event, which would happen immediately following the press conference, he said that it was "extremely important. [It is] an honor and blessing to play basketball, [you] get lots of opportunities to help people."

He is a man who is deeply devoted to his craft. He famously lost 20 pounds when he signed up for the US National Team that went undefeated in the recently concluded FIBA Tournament of the Americas. He called his training regime, "Kobefest," because of its intensity. He explained even his bad "Kobefest out" while doing it. It worked though.

In a team with a lot of scorers like LeBron James, Michael Redd and Carmelo Anthony, Bryant eagerly took the role of defensive-minded, sharing down-to-earth guards of other teams like Leandro Barbosa and Carlos Arroyo. It also showed a new dimension of Bryant, that of a facilitator, a team player. For most people, it was an eye-opener.

The 2004-2005 season was a disaster for Bryant. Coach Rudy Tomjanovich resigned in the middle of the season and the team missed the playoffs. Things picked up dramatically with the return of Phil Jackson as coach in the 2005-2006 season. That was the season of "81," when Bryant scored the second highest point total by a player in an NBA game. The Lakers also returned to the playoffs that year, taking a 3-1 lead against the Phoenix Suns to their first second round-up. They were unable to seal the deal, however, and the Suns rallied to take the next four games and advance.

Role model

When asked if he considered himself a role model, Bryant was humble, sort of, saying, "When people talk of role models, society assumes they're perfect. But the definition of role model is someone we choose from. Kids should learn from his or her mistakes."

Bryant did somewhat that the rant that made him so appealing to kids was the fact that he "disliked school" before confessing that it was really because he lived each day as though it were his last. In fact, Bryant was like that for most of the interview.

That, he wasn't the laugh-out-loud clown that O'Neal is in interviews, but he did possess a dry wit that was refreshing.

Bryant further endeared himself to the female portion of the audience by taking off his shirt and tossing on just a jersey top that emphasized his stock, muscular arms.

Bryant continued to shine in the recently concluded NBA season. He won his second straight NBA scoring title, helped out by four consecutive 50-point games and six 30-point games total in the season.

Kobe's repeated insult however, and the Lakers were once again ousted by the Phoenix Suns in the playoffs. Controversy reared its head again when Bryant demanded to be traded if Jerry Sloan, the former assistant manager who brought in Bryant himself, did not return to the Lakers to replace Mitch Kupchak. He later denied the trade demand, but followed that up three days later with another trade request. Three hectic after that, he recanted his comment yet again.

KOBE Bryant proving [illegible]

KOBE Bryant headlines the basketball show of the year, The Superstars Live Tour 2007.—Pamela Ing

POSING with the lucky kids of Ebisco Baler Elementary School from Mabalacat, Pampanga

TWO young fans of Kobe

HUNDREDS of fans lined up at Nike Park, The Fort, to catch a glimpse of their basketball idol, Kobe Bryant.

KOBE Bryant, along with members of the Nike Elite Camp, coach Eric Musselman (far left) and Jim Compton (far right)

KIDS in awe after seeing Kobe's supernatural dunk

KOBE shares some of his hardwood-dubsicles techniques with members of the Nike Elite camp.

KOBE Bryant nurses at his Filipino fans at Nike Park, The Fort.

ECSTATIC at seeing their basketball icon in the flesh

THE GUTIERREZ brothers, Kobe fans as well

PBA icons Alvin Patrimonio (left), Dennis Tan, (top) Jaime Samson and Raoul Belmonte of Nike

Singing a new tune

Without a doubt, Bryant needs some help if the Lakers are to get past the first round of the playoffs, and even more help if they want to win a championship. It is common knowledge that Bryant is irritated at management for not getting him the help, repeating down his request to reunite the all-time-great trio, Byron Davis, Ron Artest, Jason Kidd, and Jermaine O'Neal.

He managed to downplay it though, saying that "whatever happens, happens" when asked if he expressed any new fears to join him in training camp. Further more, he joked that he would like the entire Team USA on the Lakers if they had the cap space.

It isn't hard to point Bryant as a diva, as a selfish player looking out for himself rather than for the good of the team. After seeing him in person and hearing him speak though, one cannot help but sing a new tune.

"We're all just trying to raise the game," he said when asked for some parting words. And while raising his game is something he does all the time, here he was as well, raising the game of the kids from the Ebisco Baler Charity because he felt that doing so was as important as further refining his jump shot.

Something exclusive is coming your way in Inquirer Sunday Lifestyle.

Don't miss the September 16 issue of the Inquirer.

INQUIRER

ATENEO VS LA SALLE

Radio rivalry

By Roni Tizon
ABS-CBN Contributor

PEOPLE ALREADY KNOW HOW fireworks are exchanged when Ateneo and La Salle battle it out on the hardcourt.

What happens, then, when Eagles and Archers collide on FM radio? Students, faculty and alumni from both schools will find out in "Ready-2-Rumble," a special series of talk shows that merge Ateneo and La Salle personalities in a radio free-for-all.

The idea for "Ready-2-Rumble" emerged when Blue Eagle co-founder of Ateneo's pioneering show "Taldikan Radio," and Richard del Rosario, co-creator of La Salle's recently launched "Green Archer Radio," explored the possibility of pitting "Taldikan" against "Green Archer."

Once the other boys agreed and the station, 98.5/87 backed the concept, the radio showdown between blue and green was set in motion.

"We heard that 'Taldikan Radio' got a lot of complaints from listeners," Del Rosario quips. "That's why 'Green Archer Radio' is joining them to improve the level of discourse."

Habli counters by saying, "Taldikan Radio' will happily lower its standards so it can peacefully coexist with the green from Green Archer Radio."

Trading barbs

Aside from trading barbs, both groups will discuss the ongoing UAAP Final Four, interview players in the studio as well as (remote) students interviews on both campuses during the live broadcasts. "Ready-2-Rumble" airs on Sept. 17 and 19, 9:10 p.m., live on MC 307.

Aside from Habli, PBA star Olsen Racela, MBuf Garido and "Basketball TV"'s Lin Cruz complete the Taldikan crew. La Salle diehard Mr. Magoo and Krister Ginez. Archer Ismael ABC sports analyst Jason Webb join Del Rosario to form the Green Archer gang.

"We're all good friends actually," Habli, who works with Del Rosario and CW00 in covering the PBA games, says. "We've been toying with the idea of shooting a playground of sorts for quite a while now."

"The show is going to be fun for the hosts and the listeners from both sides," 98.5/87 station manager Cris Hermosisima says. "But I think we're going to need boxseats in the studio!"

THE UNIQUE designs of the Graphic Remix Bags from Storypark reflect Graphics Manila 2007's theme "Inspire and Be Inspired."

Art is all around us

THE ARTISTS WHO ATTENDED GRAPHIA Manila 2007 at SM Mall of Asia's Conrad wage life are should not be confined within the walls of a gallery. Co-presented by a leading bag distributor, Storypark, the Graphics aims to inspire and motivate participants with its diverse lineup of creative speakers from prominent local and international design firms.

Leading the pack is the quirky duo of Bru and Mastrachev of Eleventydyne, who, together with other graphic design firms like WorkHabitsville, 27+20, Collision Theory, Hispanic Street Club and Creativeadz, transformed classic Superbreak bags into works of art as part of Storypark's Graphic Remix Bag line.

"We view everything as art because we enjoy looking at everyday objects visually, like the designs on a pouch, the way a chair is painted or build, kinetic orders. Putting art in a gallery just formalizes it," said Bru.

Rock and roll

Graphic designer Paul Guadalupe said he disagreed with the idea that art could only be credible if it was in the confines of a gallery. "Art was never meant to be kept in a box, and neither is a frame, hanging in an art gallery just for it to receive some recognition. For me the more rock and roll, the better."

Guadalupe's style as creative director for rave big music exhibitions, Pulp Magazine and MTV Ink, may explain his rock and roll roots. His online portfolio, Guadalupemedia, is a testament to this progressive artist's aim to uplift the standards of local editorial design.

Photographer Steve Tirona's surreal works (a girl seductively posed atop a bicycle merger or a gigantic billboard on Edsa and former First Lady Imelda Marcos lounging in an opulent living room holding a dog on a leash) have earned her him quite a following. "But without graphic designers helping to harness and post production, my images, my photographs will look half-baked," he said.

Although some may find it hard to accept "commercial art," the master photographer regards commercial work as a full-scale way of getting your work out there. "Good art, no matter where it is—a magazine, a billboard or a bubble-gum wrapper—will always inspire me."

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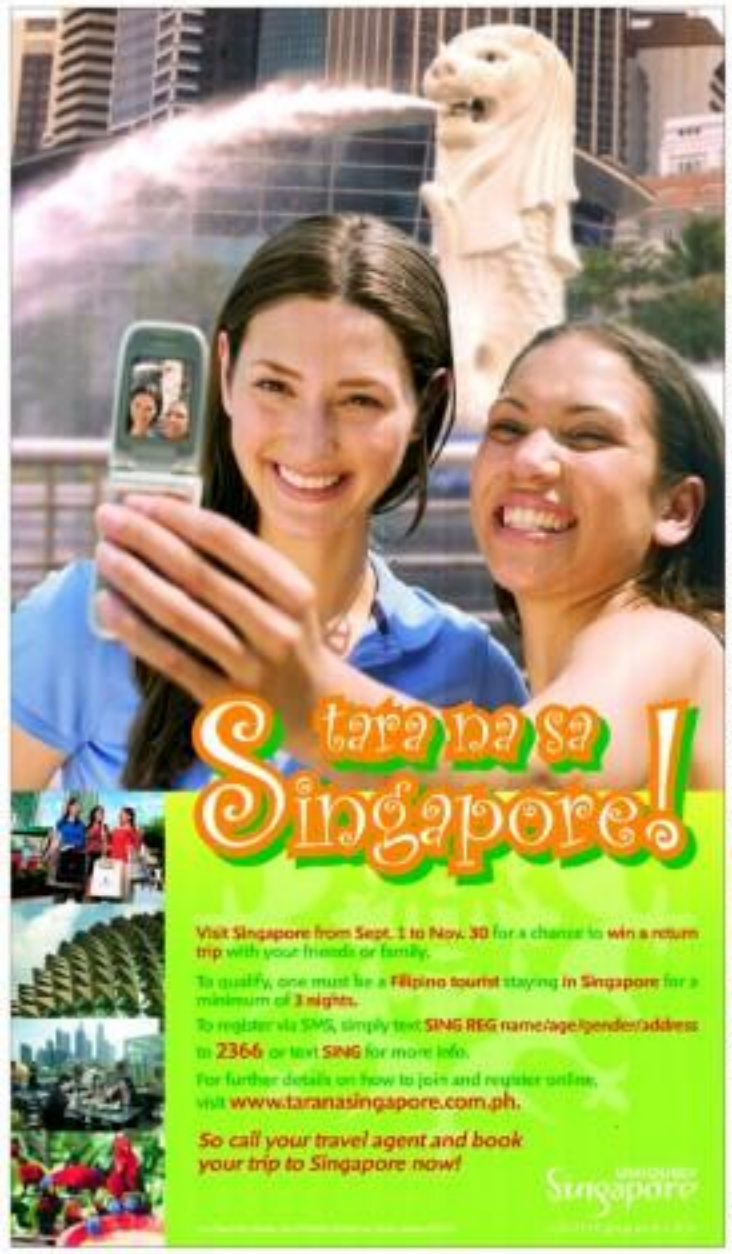
Storypark, a member of the Primer Group that carries global brands, has branches at Robinsons Place Manila, Robinsons Galleria, SM Cagayan de Oro, SM Davao, SM The Block, SM Pampanga, SM Southmall and Ayala Cebu. E-mail: storypark@primergroup.com.ph or visit www.storypark.ph.



STORYPACK'S Graphic Remix Bags composed of leading bag brands Timbuk2, JanSport, Tagger and Hedgren can be seen at SM Mall of Asia's Conrad wage into a gallery.

THOUSANDS of artists stormed SM Mall of Asia's Conrad wage for the annual Multimedia and Graphic Design Conference.

ENTERTAINMENT

Edited by Emmie G. Rebordo

Brad Pitt 'stunned' by Venice Best Actor win

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

By Robert V. Noguiera

TORONTO, CANADA—"I WAS STUNNED."

That was his reaction, Brad Pitt told this reporter, when he received the news that he had won the best actor award in the 64th Venice Film Festival for his performance in "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford."

Pitt is here for the Toronto International Film Festival, where the same film is an entry.

The actor got the call from his producing partners who were in Venice for the awards night ceremonies just before his scheduled interview with this reporter's group, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Pitt, who won for his portrayal of American outlaw Jesse James and for won with his partner, Angelina Jolie, when the call came through.

He recounted: "My first reaction was, 'Huh?' I did not expect it. It's a great honor ... to be part of the list of actors who won ... I'm still processing this."

Pitt registered elation at Cate Blanchett's Best Actress prize for portraying Bob Dylan in the bold, experimental "I'm Not There," which shared the Special Jury Prize with "La Graine et le Mulet."

He said his triumph was especially rewarding since "The Assassination," written and directed by Andrew Dominik, was plagued by production problems and delays and took three years to make.

Casey Affleck, who plays Robert Ford, said of his co-star's victory: "It's a well-deserved honor for Brad. He really put himself in the hands of Andrew. He could have said, 'I can do this on my own.' But he submitted himself as a 'puppet' of Andrew to the best possible sense of the word. He gave another dimension to Jesse James."

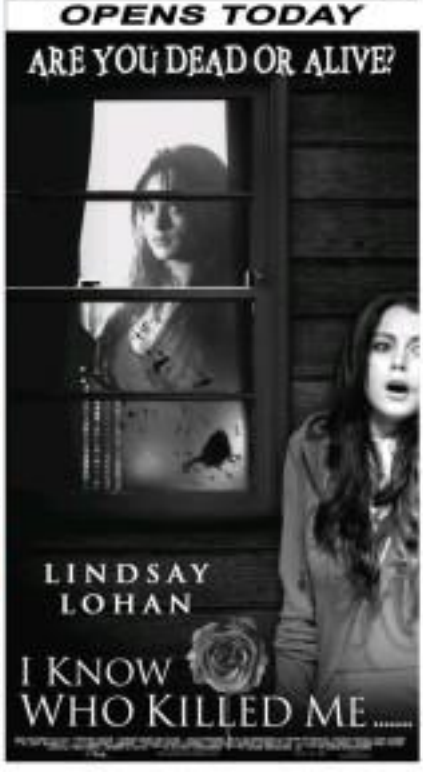
Dominik said, "I am thrilled for Brad. Directing him and this movie was like playing cowboys and Indians but on a more sophisticated level."

Ang Lee duplicated his Venice triumph two years ago for "Brokeback Mountain." The Chinese director's "Lust, Caution" won the Golden Lion top prize award.

The Philippines' Lav Diaz won the Special Mention Prize in the Horizons (Orizzonti) Documentary section of the festival for his nine-hour entry, "Kagadanan sa Huwan sang mga Kagimbal (Death in the Land of the Encantos)."

Brian De Palma was declared Best Director for "Redacted," a drama on the Iraq conflict.

Hush Puppies



Opening Today

Foster Child

Stars: Charry Pie Pineda, Eugene Domingo, Don Alvarez, Ara Mina

Directed by: Jeffrey Jeturian

The country's entry to this year's Directors' Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival tells the story of a slum-dweller (Pineda) who takes care of abandoned children for a government stipend of P1,500 a month. Jeturian (Tuhog) of La Mesilda fame, the director, "who depicts a woman's sacrifices, with the virtuosity of a chess tournament," Review 11. "Lover of the kayanan says the film is "tremendously moving ... significant and subversive."

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Possible tie looms in the Gawad Urian

By Lito B. Zulueta

WILL THE MANDIRIUM SG PE-Making Pilipino, the enemy of the critics behind the Gawad Urian, made its 30th year with another of its proverbial ties that have characterized the best acting categories through the years? A tie in the Urian has become something of an industry joke. "The Maestro can't make up their minds!" an entertainment writer cries out about the propensity of the Urian to choose winners in deadlock fashion.

But no one has really seriously disputed with the critics on

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Opening Today

From page E1

Ligw Liluro

Mary Kevlin, John Gilbert Ross, George Macaraeg, John Michael Lee

Directed by Jay Abello, Manny Montelibano

A Chronodrama every this year, this period drama deserves the distinction caused to a small Negros town when the post office closes shop. Lito Zulueta of the bayanan opines that the film's "recreation of the past [is] ... effective and astounding." Senior U. Term dewriters is an "a few, dark and silhouettes tale of how heroes ... affect the old, and fear of people's lives." Cachaviely at Industrias Robinsons Galleria.

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SAMSUNG

OPENING TODAY

From page E3

The Brave One

Stars: Jodie Foster, Terrence Howard, Naveen Andrews, Mary Steenburgen

Directed by Neil Jordan

It is often described as a female "Death Wish" for the post-Sept. 11 era. After being attacked, a radio jock (Foster) takes the law into her own hands. Jamie Chang of Variety commends Foster for delivering a performance of "astonishing physical and psychological credibility." Michael Rechtshaffen of The Hollywood Reporter thinks "it's flawed but disturbing." Josh Tyler of Cinemablend.com calls it "mentally-crushed."

Underdog

With the voices of Jason Lee, Jim Belushi, Amy Adams, Brad Garrett

Directed by Frederick Du Chau

A mad scientist turns an ordinary police dog into a canine with superpowers. Jack Mathews of New York Daily News remembers that it's "made for the Saturday-morning TV crowd." Sam Adams of Los Angeles Times cracks: "The movie's dropdown is galling." Jean-nette Catsoulis of New York Times agrees, panning it to-mak for its "witless cudgel ... (Jim Belu) couldn't sell Fraiture in a dog pack."

SM CINEMA

movietime SHOWTIME

Your life as a movie

By the Inquirer/
Inquirer.net Entertainment

[illegible] MAKIMKIM, HOT [illegible] show host, told Bashee how [illegible] up dancing with the Vi na. "Deal or No Deal" runner-[illegible] "I was taping for 'Pilipinas Got Talent,' ANG" when someone asked me to drop by the set of 'Deal.' I said no, Vi deserved to have this moment all to herself. Then Vi was requested to dance, and she said she would...if the [illegible] stopped us and danced with her. Guess what, Bashee and your [illegible] The EP went into panic mode, Bashee is not [illegible] show himself. Wala na, I no "sexy" the camera. Ramos was coming down, the walked into the set."

However it happened, [illegible] was his. It diverted our a[illegible] tion from Eric Saguisag, who [illegible] not an easy thing to do, by [illegible] amount.

* * *

Top of the talk show

► Marian Rivera, on Ge[illegible] ensuing number of her [illegible] roles starting in "Stainless" [illegible] "Siguro po lang ako [illegible] siguro ko sa ex-relationship kaya para hindi ko mas[illegible] ng mga tsismis kita, gusto [illegible] Basta ngayon, parang ko, [illegible] babe. Ibig sabihin na [illegible] malalaki, gusto mo akong [illegible] ng flashgun, okay na [illegible] you."

► Bianca King, on her relationship with Dado Anonuevo: [illegible] Lil Pic:

"Siguro dapat mangyaring [illegible] time but as talking point [illegible] Pero at ngayon, at pa[illegible] lansing exhibit sa publiko [illegible] parehi kaming may mga [illegible] ing career na [illegible] gusto namin at dito dumalo [illegible] launch." (That's a 'yes-we-[illegible] right?)

► Joey de Leon, asked [illegible] would forgive Willie [illegible] him:

"Hindi ako nanggad na [illegible] bingi ka eh ... Alinlang [illegible] may dalawa ang nakaupo [illegible] na dalawang co-host na [illegible] para din bakang nagpo-sorry [illegible] at alin. Kaya eto nakaupo [illegible] nagpo-sorry. Sorry, hindi [illegible] nakaupo-pa ang sorry [illegible] (Strangely enough, "Bitoy's" fans and the viewing public [illegible] personal issues to have pai[illegible] behind them.)

Yilmaz's parting gift

► Remember Sunita on a [illegible] seminarian" (anuvenin sig[illegible] that Yilmaz Bektas gave [illegible] Cautious Indian hearing [illegible] country last month:

"Sinabi na niya [illegible] Imagen at isang sira si Yi[illegible] ... na hindi na makakab[illegible] im. (Kung pagkawasto na [illegible] ano, baka bale ha na Bagha[illegible] pa. Mabuti't ka si [illegible] hanaill siya dito at ensena[illegible] to na pa sira, Bagh. Imag[illegible] sa sumunday na sha sa [illegible] Yun." (Shaki, ano kaya 'yo[illegible] blackeye, Bulgari mantik, [illegible] 420 of the phone?)

Handling a crisis

► John Prats relates how [illegible] go the news that sister Ca[illegible] was pregnant:

"Galing sila sa rehearsal [illegible] ANG' My dad, mom, pi[illegible] multilang 'problemadong [illegible] bita (At oh!)', 'Bitu Chen, [illegible] gawas sabi ni you.' So nam[illegible] long sila. For 20 [illegible] nahanap lang nila. Japan [illegible] siya, Malibu, Sofia.' Kin[illegible] han sa sinabi ko. Gulat [illegible] ter a pregnant,' 'ang galing [illegible] may my dad handled it. Be[illegible] I could react, sabi nya: 'Tanggapin natin.' Pie sana [illegible] at room to Cam that night [illegible] didn't say anything. I [illegible] hugged her and told her, 'I [illegible] love for you.' Umiyak [illegible] ego—pero kuwa."

► John describes the baby [illegible] Camille's child, Ambrose [illegible] unique.

"Skyperonlik, Hopefully [illegible] Frankly, man." (Ano! Is he [illegible] ng se-earring?)

► John's message to dis[illegible] Paul Soriano, Camille's fo[illegible] boyfriend, silence imply to [illegible] tial queries if he had [illegible] the child was, "Respetuhin [illegible] ...Tahimik ang ano wala ko [illegible] respeto ito. Pangalawa, [illegible] someone?" ang dating ni[illegible]

two gentlemen in Camille Prats' life

CAMILLE PRATS

ing on's. Ako na ang nagsasabi, 'ha' talaga. Huwag ka na lang makinig."

■ Camille Prats, if she had any feelings of guilt...

"Meron, syempre. Kasi parang may guilt kasi knowingat I don't wanto dumilo to get chrough that. Yung parang ayaw pr Yung sakit and all that ..." (Her girl is serious!; what did you expect?)

■ Camille on revealing her first-month pregnancy on the public:

"Wala naman akong dapat ikahiya. It's a wonderful gift [from] God. As ang pinaniwala, I think it was the public ... the truth about my life. It's a blessing and I'm very proud of it and I don't regret anything."

Opening Today

From page E4

I Know Who Killed Me

Starring Lindsay Lohan, Julia Ormond, Neal McDonough, Sivan Geraghty

Directed by Chris Sivertson

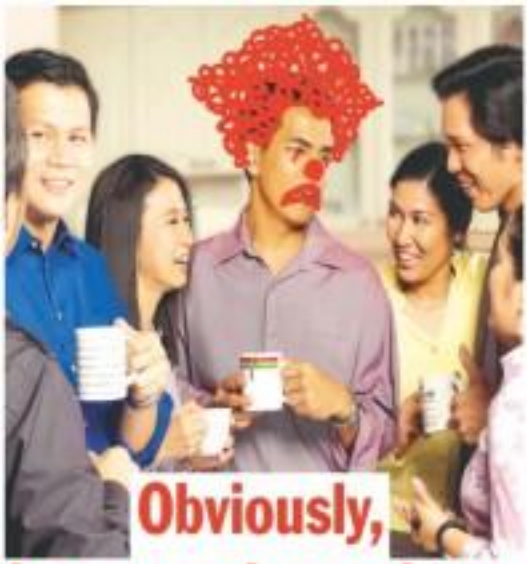
In this thriller, a chubby coed (Lohan) is kidnapped and molested. When she wakes up at the hospital, she tells people that she's an exotic dancer. Jon Stuart of Showbiz notes: "A grotesquely salacious horror tale that provokes unspeakable contempt in us and audience alike." Owen Gleiberman of Entertainment Weekly clarifies it as a "grisly piece of torture porn." Jim Bailey of LA Weekly sees it as "a excited, disjointed mood piece."

Rogue Assassin

Stars Jet Li, Jason Statham, Isabella Rohrsgaard, Katie Boland

Directed by Philip G. Atwell

Originally titled "War" in the US, this action flick pits a Chinese hitman with an FBI agent obsessed with revenge. Wesley Morris of Boston Globe complains that the movie "barely scratches either man's strengths ... [It's a] boring battle." Peter Hartlaub of San Francisco Chronicle concurs: "It lacks action." Michael Rechtshaffen of The Hollywood Reporter: "The plot goes from unpredictable to confusing."



Possible tie looms ...

From page 61

their idiosyncratic decisions, because the Urian is considered the most credible award-giving body in the entertainment industry.

The last tie in the Best Actress category happened in 2001, when dreams de Rossi and Suzanna Reyes won the award for "Bishop" and "Sa Vida Rosa," respectively.

Before that, the award had witnessed a tie in 1990, when Sharon Cuneta and Nora Aunor shared the trophy for "Madrasta" and "Bakit May Kahapon Pa?", and in 1995, when Aunor and Helen Gamboa won for "The Flor Contemplacion Story" and "Bagong Bayani.... OFW." The last two movies were about the same story—the execution of Contemplacion in Singapore.

Most-tied Best Actress

Aunor appears in be the "most tied" Best Actress in Urian history, tie tied with her contemporary and biggest rival, Vilma Santos, in 1988, when she won the award for "Bilangin ang Bituin sa Langit," and Santos for "Pahiram ng Isang Umaga."

Tight race

But the first Urian tie was scored in 1985 when Gina Alajar and Willa Ribaya shared the award for "Bayo" (Pahiram Ng Isang Bukas)," and "Bilanggo Sa Dilim" (collectively directed by Lino Brocka).

So will there be a tie again this year when the Movestar awards its 30th year?

All that the Urian critics could say is that the race has been tight. The Best Actress nominees are Judy Ann Santos ("Kasal, Binyag, Libing"), Angel Aquino ("Kaleldo"), Gina Pareño ("Kabisote"), Jaclyn Jose ("Mumog"), Melaine Marie Laxa ("Kimmy and Addie") and Andrea del Rosario ("Rome and Juliet").

Reports say that the critics are particularly hard-pressed to choose between Pareño, Santos and Rosario.

The only tie to have taken place outside of the Best Actress race was in the Best Screenplay award in 2001, when Lav Diaz and Armando Lao shared the trophy for "Batang Westside" and "La Vida Rosa," respectively.

Notable year

2001 was notable. It was when the Maestro had chose to memorialize its 20th year by wresting wins in the Best Screenplay and Best Actress awards (Aunor in "Bata" and Rosanna Roces).

2002 is celebrate its 30th anniversary with some of the same?

The 30th Gawad Urian awards on Sept. 15, 7 p.m., at the Ilaya Lee Irwin Theater of the Ateneo de Manila University. Hosted by ABC Presidentiam, the ceremonies will be broadcast on RPN 9.

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GALLERIA

1 THE BRAVE ONE + 3HX	6 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	7 DISTURBIA
3 Indefilms: LIGAW LIHAM	8 A LOVE STORY NANCY DREW
4 UNDERDOG	9 EVAN ALMIGHTY FOSTER CHILD
5 SHINING LIGHTS	10 1408

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ERMITA

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	
2 1408 FOSTER CHILD	5 UNDERDOG
3 DISTURBIA	6 THE BRAVE ONE

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METRO EAST

1 UNDERDOG	5 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	6 1408
3 THE BRAVE ONE	7 DISTURBIA
4 DAYWATCH	8 A LOVE STORY RUSH HOUR 3

NOVALICHES

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE
2 UNDERDOG	4 DAYWATCH

PIONEER

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE
2 UNDERDOG	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

STA. ROSA	LIPA
1 THE LAST LEGION / SIGNOS	1 UNDERDOG
2 UNDERDOG	2 THE INVASION
3 SINKING OF JAPAN	3 THE LAST LEGION
4 THE BRAVE ONE	4 RUSH HOUR 3

DASMARINAS	IMUS
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG	2 UNDERDOG
3 SIGNOS	3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 DAYWATCH	4 DAYWATCH

ANGELES	TARLAC
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	1 SINKING of JAPAN
2 UNDERDOG	2 A LOVE STORY
3 HAIRSPRAY	3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 DISTURBIA	

STARMILLS	
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	4 HAIRSPRAY
2 UNDERDOG	5 DISTURBIA
3 SIGNOS	6 RUSH HOUR 3

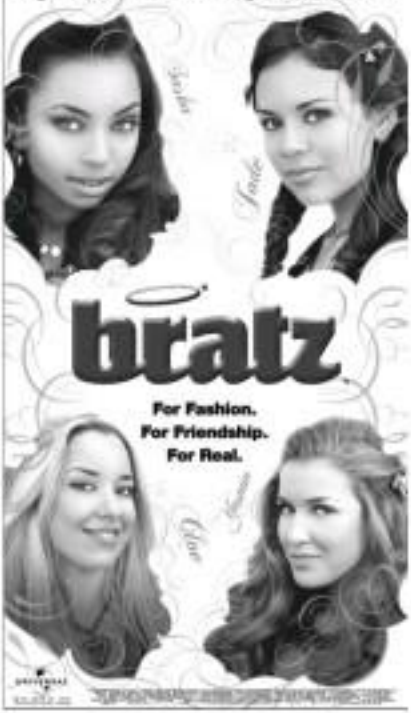
BACOLOD	ILOILO
1 UNDERDOG	1 UNDERDOG
2 1408	2 1408
3 THE INVASION	3 THE LAST LEGION
4 SINKING of JAPAN	4 THE INVASION
5 PLANET TERROR	5 MY GUY'S WEDDING
6 SIGNOS	6 SIGNOS

CHEER FACTOR

LAS VEGAS—Somewhere, Kevin Federline is laughing. Britney Spears's frenzied wham could be the most talked-about performance of the MTV Video Music Awards...for all the wrong reasons. She looked blurry and unprepared, and appeared to have forgotten the art of dance and lip-synching. Worst, she was out of shape. AP

OPENS SEPT 19

High school is about to get a makeover.



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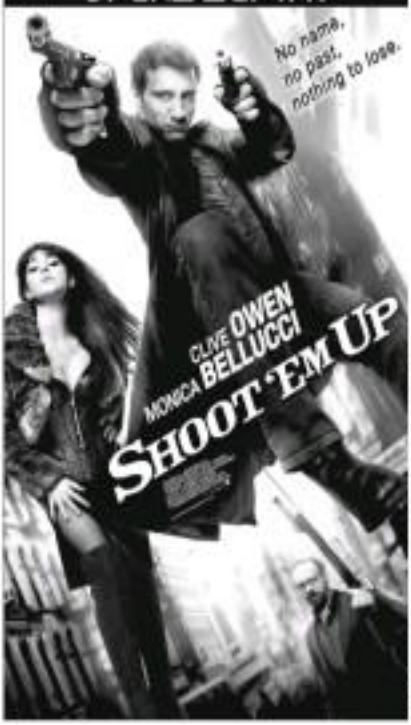

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SAMSUNG

Luis Manzano stops talking about Angel

From page 08

Page E4 |

It's only natural that John feels possessive about Camille. When I heard about John's comment, "Nobody hang so. Need na ako si Camille," I could not help but remember when Kap Ahmee told me that John kind of left her, too, and gave her the "deadline" treatment for something. History has no uncanny way of repeating itself, huh? Past is past but some of us can't let...

A funny death scene

John Arcilla tried to lighten the mood during the taping of a dramatic scene in "Magnifikabet" when I was lying in a coffin while Ramon Cardillo and Jay sun K were crying as they looked at him...

When the camera was not focused on John, he made funny faces to distract Ramon and K. They wanted to get the same attention and done with, so both of them just ignored John's antics. But after that coffin scene, they all could have died laughing!

Childish jousting

Joey de Leon's catchy one-liner to Willie Revillame, "Explain ko kina yan complaint?" still rocks us on T-shirts, mugs, caps, etc. Talk about finding gold in the trash.

Just a friendly suggestion. While they're at it, why don't they also sell merchandise media armed with these words: Restraint after you drain.

Haven't we had enough of that childish one-air jousting? "Explain," "complain," it's all getting to sound like a boring refrain. It's one thing for a show to have many ads and quite another thing to air the hosts' lamentations, ad infinitum.

Razed It

Camh Total Entertainer Rico J. Puno with Bella Miss Quinto on Sept. 30, 8 p.m. at Music Museum. Irresistible in "Itinerant 19-Nine," a fund-raising concert for the benefit of Makatao Foundation. Organized by Yayah Quizon's EVENTmally-Events & Promotions, it's surely gonna be a razed & sweating with Rico and Bella Mae. It for reasons and rib-tickling!

Cosmo bash

Cosmopolitan Magazine's Bachelor bash just keeps getting better each year. Bridesmaid broke loose as the 60 gorgeous centerfolds led by Dingdong Dantes aroused their stuff at the NBC tent, which had been converted into a wild island. If you missed the glorious event, you can still fantasize about the hunks by grabbing a copy of this mo's exclusive September issue. Incidentally, that was one bash where everyone behaved unbelievably.

E-mail: watersighs@yahoo.com

Luis Manzano stops talking about Angel Locsin

LUIS MANZANO WOULD NOW rather keep to himself things regarding Angel Locsin. He has been unfairly accused by some quarters of using Angel for publicity purposes. Luis just clings off the nasty talk.

During the run of Villita Sessions and John Manzano on studio to be for her broadcast although he has already covered a name of his own. In he doesn't need to resort to any form of gimmickry.

He says, "For a change, I won't be vocal about Angel. What's important is that between us there's no problem. We understand each other well."

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

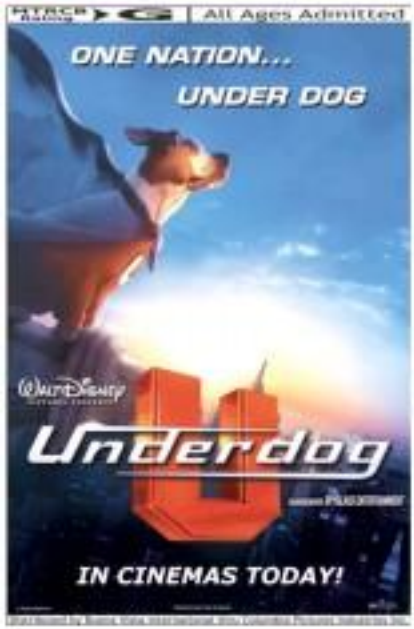
Who are the stars or gods he's auditioning with aside from Angel? "When I court a girl, on my long drive ... Christ-centered thoughts."

What advice has his dad and mom given him about love? "They pretty much leave me alone when it comes to heart matters." Lucky guy. "Iniisip namin na John Alfie, ayaw pa rin nitong magkaasawa." Manny Vi is not quite ready to say, "I love you, Lucky A," just yet.

Misleading

John Pride announces the "no comment" coach's stance under Steve Paul Swinden. Christ Domingo's BF's when asked if he's the father of the coming baby of his ex, Camille Prats. Aha look that Brad should just say "no" instead of misleading the public with a vague reply. (The father of Camille's baby is Sen BF Lanbert Ejercito.)

Paul probably meant no harm. He's just not used yet to the business of show biz as such. (See related items on Rather, A-16, F1



AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 FOSTER CHILD	2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE	4 UNDERTOW
GLORIETTA 4	1 UNDERTOW	2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	3 THE BRAVE ONE	
	4	5 DISTURBIA	6 ROGUE ASSASSIN	7 1408
GREENBELT 1	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 THE BRAVE ONE		
GREENBELT 3	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 THE BRAVE ONE		
	3 DISTURBIA	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	5 UNDERTOW	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THE BRAVE ONE	2 ROGUE ASSASSIN		
	3 UNDERTOW	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	5 DISTURBIA	
AYALA CENTER CINEMA	1 DISTURBIA	2 UNDERTOW	3 SHREK THE THIRD	4 BUG
MARKET! MARKET!	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 FOSTER CHILD		
	3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	4 THE BRAVE ONE	5 UNDERTOW	
TRINOMA	1 FOSTER CHILD	2 DISTURBIA	3 UNDERTOW	4 FANTASTIC FOUR: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER
	5 1408	6 ROGUE ASSASSIN	7 THE BRAVE ONE	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — MIMIA - Miniature Fair, September 10 & 11, 2007 at the Glorietta Activity Center

Greenbelt — Jazz Nights, September 12, 2007 at GB 3 Art Precinct

Alabang Town Center — Beyond Exhibit, September 1 to 16, 2007 at the Activity Center

Ayala Center Cebu — Silver Years of American Idol Cast, September 20, 6 PM, Solfrago (Cinema 1)

Market! Market! — Lechon Ball Show, September 6 & 8, 2007 at the Activity Center

Christian's — Aquarium Philippines presents Disney's FINDING LA Kids at SM's Globe Theater, Manila August 31, 2007. For inquiries, pls. call 891-2718

Ayala Museum — Malaysian Heritage in the Basement, August 31 to September 10, 2007. For more info pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 30 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

Tsi Nonna — Samsung Exhibit, An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones, September 10 to 16, 10am to 9 pm, Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2

THE GREAT SPORTS OUTLET SALE

SEPT. 10-16
MARKET! MARKET!
ACTIVITY CENTER

adidas SPORTS DEPOT
FILA AND1

Glorietta Greenbelt Alabang Town Center Ayala Center Cebu Tsi Nonna